The Cosmopolitanism of Arthur Symons, 1880-1910

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my departure to London in 2008. I am very sure I have not been strong enough to accomplish this thesis alone. I dedicate this to all those who supported me and believed I would complete the Ph.D.

Abstract

The aim of my thesis is to identify the cosmopolitanism of Arthur Symons (1865-1945) for the re-evaluation of his works, including travel essays, fiction writing, and his editorship of *The Savoy* magazine. As one of the crucial leaders of the Victorian fin-de-siècle literary scene, Symons has been discussed in various contexts, such as decadence, impressionism, symbolism, and modernism. From these approaches, I focus on the 'cosmopolitan' aspect in him that is consistently found throughout his career.

Chapter 1 explores the background of Symons's borderless travelling style, and argues the series of travel essays on Venice that reveal his awareness of the fictitious nature of Western Orientalism. The favourable descriptions of the multicultural sphere as mosaics of different pieces are surely linkable to the current discussion on globalization. Chapter 2 discusses 'flâneur poet' Symons's 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism', focusing on his description of the metropolitan, hybrid view of London with an anonymous crowd. Chapter 3 re-evaluates his

editorship of *The Savoy* (Jan-Dec 1896), because this periodical venture is an important example of Symons putting his cosmopolitan ideals into practice as an editorial policy. He made every effort to offer an international literary intersection on the pages of the magazine, and this experience later brought the publication of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899), his most internationally successful work. Chapter 4 analyses *Spiritual Adventures* (1905) as an example of the ambivalence of the cosmopolitanism Symons notices, which appears as the symbolism of water in *Spiritual Adventures* (1905).

Finally, Symons's cosmopolitanism is not a forceful persuasion to seek monotonous unity like a 'cosmopolitan law'. Rather, it is a voice to invite us to see the world from a new perspective, one where every individual can coexist, side by side, without losing her/ his own identity. Such a humble cosmopolitanism cannot bring dramatic, rapid change to the world-view. However, in a longer span, it will not be powerless. We can surely find this sincere hope in Symons. He exhibits the possibility of aesthetic cosmopolitanism to the future, rewriting the stereotypical impression of Victorian literature as the representation of Western Imperialism.

Introduction

The purpose of my thesis is to explore the cosmopolitanism of Arthur Symons (1865–1945) and re-evaluate his works with a new light, looking at his travel essays, poems, fictions, and editorship of a literary magazine. As his most active years occurred between the 1880s and the early 1900s, his works have often been discussed in the context of Victorian fin-de-siècle decadence or early 20th-century modernism, focusing on his career as a poet and a literary critic who introduced a new literary movement of the age, French Symbolism, in English. *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899; 1919), surely the most representative work by Symons, greatly influenced the poets of the next generation, when modernism took hold. T.S. Eliot admitted, 'I myself owe Mr. Symons a great debt: but for having read his book I should not, in the year 1908, have heard of Laforgue or Rimbaud',[1] while Ezra Pound listed Symons as one of his 'gods', along with

[1] T. S. Eliot, '*Baudelaire and the Symbolists* by Pater Quennell', *Criterion*, IX, 35 (January 1930), p.357.

Plato, Dante, Spinoza, and Pater.[2] His role as an international literary bridge may contribute to Symons being dubbed a 'cosmopolitan'. When W. B. Yeats got to know Symons in the early 1890s, Symons was 'completely the cosmopolitan man of letters',[3] and Richard Ellmann states that Symons was 'more cosmopolitan than anybody'.[4] As Julia Prewitt Brown observes, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, artists and writers, including Oscar Wilde, Edmund Gosse, Arthur Symons, and J. M. Whistler, journeyed back and forth across the channel. The gulf between sentimental or 'low' art of nationalistic subject matter and the 'high' art of cosmopolitan culture widened to clarify the cultural character of the aesthetic movement.[5] Considering this atmosphere of the age, it seems that cosmopolitan aspects were welcomed as a kind of trend among literary/artistic circles, and the term 'cosmopolitan' was used for a person involved in the latest up-and-coming movement globally. Ulf Hannerz[6] describes a cosmopolitanism

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[2] G. Thomas Tanselle, 'Two Early Letters of Ezra Pound', *American Literature*, XXXIV (1 March 1962), p.118.
[3] Norman Alford, *The Rhymers' Club: Poets of the Tragic Generation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p.57.
[4] Richard Ellmann, 'Dangerous Acquaintances', *The New York Review of Books* (July 15, 1965), p.17.
[5] Julia Prewitt Brown, *Cosmopolitan Criticism: Oscar Wilde's Philosophy of Art*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p.29.
[6] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 252.

that classifies people into two categories: ‘cosmopolitan globals’ and ‘locals’, which exhibits the dichotomy of ‘local competence with regard to alien cultures’ against ‘cosmopolitan connoisseur with mastery’.[7]

With the success of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899; 1919), it is natural that Symons’s career as an Anglo–French literary bridge contributed to his being understood as cosmopolitan. However, using the term simply as a substitute for ‘international’ is problematic, considering that ‘cosmopolitanism’ still holds some ambiguity, reflecting the variants of cosmopolitanism available from the past to today.

The origin of the word ‘cosmopolitan’ is, in Greek, *kosmo polites* (citizen of the world). The Cynic Diogenes of Sinope (400–323 BC) was the first to proclaim himself a cosmopolitan in response to questions regarding his place of origin, and this statement was developed into a more positive version of Zeno’s (Zeno of Citium; 334–262 BC) concept of universal citizenship. For Diogenes, being a cosmopolitan meant that he had chosen to leave his home city and refused to belong to any local place. Diogenesian cosmopolitanism accepts a kind of solitude,

[7] Ibid., pp.252-253.

abandoning the comfort home; he prioritized the freedom to visit anywhere in the world as a cosmopolitan right; he believed that humanity and reason could support such a life. This concept is, as I argue in chapter 1, quite close to Symonsian cosmopolitanism, for Symons was a frequent traveller aestheticizing a nomadic life as ideal for an artistic figure. On the other hand, Zeno and other Stoic cosmopolitan philosophers stated that a cosmopolitan should not abandon local identification because it is an important idea to support one's life, and a cosmopolitan should responsibly be conscious of his identification, belonging both to the smaller community and to the world. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) also had tremendous influence on contemporary cosmopolitanism as the author of *Zum ewigen Frieden* (For the Perpetual Peace; 1795); He was the first philosopher to provide a thorough discussion of the moral dimensions of cosmopolitanism, applying these principles to the international concerns of his time. Kant owes a considerable debt to the Stoics who were themselves concerned about how cosmopolitan principles could underwrite political practice. Diogenes, Zeno, and Kant all believed in a rational humanity that can bring about a peaceful world instead of a powerfully governed monarchy; only Deogenes refused to be defined

by his local origins and local group memberships, and for this refusal, Deogenes is much closer to Symons in the concept of cosmopolitanism.

In order to examine Symons's awareness of the fictive nature of Western Orientalism, some studies from the 20th century are helpful references; these often start with a re-examination of the history of imperialism as well as criticism of the West's representation of the East. For instance, Roland Barthes (1915–1980) is among the scholars conscious of the fictive nature of Western Orientalism. In the preface of his *Empire of Signs* (1970), he refused the established, stereotypical image of Japan. In *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said (1935–2003) criticized the conveniently romanticized representation of the Orient as an example of Western ambition to colonize the East, which eventually brought about the development of post-colonialism. Benedict Anderson (b. 1936) published *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* in 1983, which is a study that helps understand how the notion of the 'nation' was constructed, with various examples across the globe from Dutch nationalism to Japan's imperialism; Anderson argues that nationalism is never a favourable notion to cosmopolitan intellectuals with multilingual talents, and clearly points out that what we call a

nation is no more than an imagined community.

In order to grasp the Symonsian cosmopolitanism that welcomes diversity of human lives, Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) and Homi K. Bhabha (b. 1949) are good examples for comparison. The cosmopolitanism that Derrida advocates in *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (2001) includes unconditional hospitality but could be understood as an attitude prohibiting the positive desire or curiosity to learn about others from foreign lands. Unconditional hospitality could accelerate unification of global space, and this might negate multiculturalism, as Bhabha prioritises. In *Nation and Narration* (1990), Bhabha does not simply view the history of colonialism as a stereotypical binary of colonizer/colonized, but also speculates about the ambivalent feelings of those in between faced with different cultures. He seeks the possibility of globalisation as a crossroads of multicultural, hybrid space. For this purpose, cosmopolitan openness is an essential factor to separate nationalistic consciousness from nationalism. He patiently describes marginalized people and their experiences in colonial time and space, emphasizing the importance of their narratives. Bhabha seeks the possibility of global, hybrid space for ideal multiculturalism by sharing the same

discourse, not by violence or double-edged discourse. For Bhabha, the ideal cosmopolitan globalism is where different people with different cultural backgrounds coexist without contradiction, refusing monotonous unification and unbalanced relationships of superiority/inferiority among people. While Bhabha is a scholar of our age in the 21st century and Symons is a late-Victorian poet, certainly Bhabha and Symons share the same kind of world-view to welcome the diversity of human lives.

Another crucial scholar for understanding Symons's cosmopolitanism, John Urry's new categorization of 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' in *Consuming Places* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995) should be noted, for it gives helpful ideas to define Symonsian cosmopolitanism. Prioritizing the Kantian 'right to visit (travel)' as an essential factor for cosmopolitan temperament, Urry's 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' also regards others from unknown places as important guests. The cosmopolitanism involves an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent experiences from different cultures. There exists a search for and delight in contrasts between societies rather than a longing for uniformity or superiority.

Table of aesthetic cosmopolitanism

1. Extensive patterns of real and simulated mobility in which it is thought that one has the *right* to travel anywhere and consume, at least initially, all environments.
2. A *curiosity* about all places, peoples, and cultures, and at least a rudimentary ability to map such places and cultures historically, geographically, and anthropologically.
3. Openness to other peoples and cultures and a willingness/ability to appreciate some elements of the language/culture of the place that one is visiting.
4. A willingness to take *risks* by virtue of moving outside the tourist environmental bubble.
5. An ability to *locate* one's own society and its culture in terms of a wide-ranging historical and geographical knowledge in order to have some ability to reflect upon and judge aesthetically different natures, places, and societies.

6. A certain *semiotic* skill to be able to interpret tourist signs, see what they are meant to represent, know when they are partly ironic, and be approached in a detached fashion.[8]

Urry observes in the late 18th and early 19th centuries a similar kind of aesthetic cosmopolitanism amongst the British upper class, who were able to expand their repertoire of landscapes for visual consumption. He pays special attention to the development of tourism to discuss the formation and reproduction of such identities. His argument frequently focuses on 'mobility' in modern cities because he regards it as an important keyword to characterize aesthetic cosmopolitanism, which is closely connected to the rise of the new style of tourism (i.e., the rambling desire of the flâneur poet) in the late 19th century.

As I often refer to the above contemporary studies to discuss Victorian Symons's cosmopolitanism throughout these chapters, Symons's cosmopolitanism has many commonalities with Bhabha or Urry's, although Symons lived in the late-Victorian era. In fact, Julia Prewitt-Brown explains the

[8] John Urry, *Consuming Places* (London and NY: Routledge, 1995), p.145.

nineteenth-century *fin-de-siècle* as a period of 'flourishing transnational contacts in science and the arts', that 'the spirit of cosmopolitanism was beginning to flourish',[9] and that cosmopolitanism developed both in the decades before and after historic events such as the Great Exhibitions in London (1851) and Paris (1855, 67, 78, 89 and 1900). The British Empire between 1815–1914 seems to have created a dichotomy of imperialism and cosmopolitanism, as if the adjective 'cosmopolitan' is a fashionable, somewhat convenient label for an intellectual person with international background or knowledge who willingly entered the international, cultural interaction of the age. As seen in an upsurge of the concept of cosmopolitanism crossing various interdisciplinary fields from the end of the twentieth century to the twenty-first century, scholars of the fin-de-siecle literature have also tried to renew and analyse the interpretation, which has led to the current reconsiderations of what cosmopolitanism truly exemplifies and how the concept is represented in literary text.

Among these studies, for instance, Regenia Gagnier focuses on late Victorian cosmopolitanism, citing Lauren M. E. Goodlad and Julia M. Wright that 'the term

[9], Julia Prewitt Brown, *Cosmopolitan Criticism: Oscar Wilde's Philosophy of Art*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p.29.

cosmopolitanism is often used to designate the domain of individual feeling or ethics of toleration in contrast to the more geopolitical terminology of "inter or "trans-nationalism"',[10] and Tanya Agathocleous observes 'cosmopolitan thought was a notable feature of intellectual life' in fin-de-siècle England, as seen in the emergence of literary journals such as *Cosmopolis* (1896–1898), *The Review of Reviews* (1890–1936), and *The Savoy* (1896) that practiced various forms of cosmopolitanism.[11] With regard to the aim and the circumstance of cosmopolitan poets in Victorian fin-de-siècle London, Ana Parejo Vadillo's *Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism*: *Passengers of Modernity* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) allows me to refer to full examples of women poets whose aesthetics have many commonalties with Symons, such as the pleasure of prowling in the fluidity of the urban city.

Helped by these studies, in order to shed a new light on Symons's works, I will examine his literature from a perspective of cosmopolitanism, and not only

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[10] Regenia Gagnier, 'Good Europeans and Neo-Liberal Cosmopolitans: Ethics and Politics in Late Victorian and Contemporary Cosmopolitanism', *Victorian Literature and Culture,* 38, (2010), p. 591.

[11] Tanya Agathocleous, 'The realist spectator and the romance plot: James, Doyle, and the aesthetics of fin-de-siecle cosmopolitanism', *Urban Realism and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in the Nineteenth Century: Visible City, Invisible World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.117.

his decadent poems and literary criticisms on symbolism, but also his works of hitherto quieter reception including travel writings and short fictions.

On the general reception of Symons in literary history, it is undeniable that Symons has receded to a minor position compared to his contemporaries such as Wilde and Yeats. Symons lived a long life, but the majority of his literary output occurred between 1880 and the early 1900s. In 1908, he suffered a mental breakdown in Italy, and since then, his name has faded in literary circles. After the first symptom he suffered, Symons published *Confessions: A Study in Pathology* (1930), appealing that he had already recovered and could analyse his own condition, which only enhanced the impression that he had not yet recovered at all. The surprising pace and frequency with which Symons published short essays and reviews for various periodicals might contribute to his unwelcoming position in the history of English literature, as though he only devoted his talent to periodical pages, rather than large, coherent volumes. In his defence, Symons may have been attentive to the periodical market of his time—its distributional impact and speed—and thus devoted himself to articles on the latest topics, while ironically, this stance seems to have added some lightness to his career.

Thanks to some studies, especially those written after the 1950s, Symons's position has gradually improved from being a 'literary ghost' to being not only one of the decadent poets of the 1890s, but also an important mediator of the 19th-century fin-de-siècle and 20th-century modernism. Among them, Frank Kermode's *Romantic Image* (1957) is a crucial study that provided a rehabilitation of Symons's role in the history of English literature. Kermode argues that Symons adopted Donne's method to modernism by way of symbolism. This study proved to be notably valuable as a turning point in re-evaluating Symons's literary career, and the number of studies discussing Symons's connection with modernism has increased since its publication.

For an overview of the life of Symons, the most reliable biography at the moment is definitely Karl Beckson's *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), which patiently re-examines and corrects errors included in earlier bibliographies, especially those by Roger Lhombreaud[12], whose information is often uncertain about its source, and whose references are often incorrectly cited. Still, Lhombreaud's book remains valuable as a study of Symons by a French

12 Roger Lhombreaud, *Arthur Symons: A Critical Biography* (London: Unicorn Press, 1963)

scholar of English literature, along with the studies by Louis Cazamian[13], who positions Symons as a crucial figure in comparison with Oscar Wilde and George Moore, stating that Symons deeply understood French symbolism and that *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* had an epoch-making value in the history of literary ideas. For other biographies, John M. Munro's *Arthur Symons* (New York: Twayne Publisher Inc., 1969) is also an important study discussing the shift in Symons's literary attitude, and it includes a chapter that analyses his influence on the 20th century. The earliest study of Symons's literary career, W.G. Blaikie Murdoch's *The Work of Arthur Symons: An Appreciation* (Edinburgh: J. & J. Gray, 1906) is an interesting reference; it is written by one of Symons's contemporaries, but the descriptions sometimes lack objective analysis and are filled with personal praise for 'Mr Symons'. Compared to Murdoch's book, T.E. Welby's *Arthur Symons: A Critical Study* (London: A. M. Philpot, 1925) is more integrated, while the discussion is mainly restricted to Symons's achievement as a decadent poet.

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[13] Louis Cazamian, *Symbolisme et Poésie: L'Exemple Anglais* (Neuchâtel: La Baconnière, 1957)

Symons did not publish his autobiography; therefore, his autobiographical novel, 'A Prelude to Life' in *Spiritual Adventures* (1905) is an exclusive, valuable source that illuminates his origin and temperament in his own words. Symons confessed his life-long sense of rootlessness in this text, admitting he chose to have his own eyes freed from any prejudices instead of finding a secure location in which to root himself. This confession explains the background of the literary pilgrimage in his career—the incessant seeking of a new definition for the literary movements that attracted him, one by one, as well as his isolated position in a certain literary group, such as the rather provincial 'Celtic' Rhymer's Club.

The thesis is divided into four chapters:

Chapter 1

Wanderer's Literature: The Cosmopolitan Eye of Arthur Symons

In order to grasp the cosmopolitanism in Symons, this chapter focuses on Symons as a wanderer, exploring the background of his travelling style and the aesthetic of 'nomadic life' that characterises his literature throughout his career. The origin of

Symons's life-long aspiration to go to unknown, foreign countries should be explored before discussing each work. Among the foreign cities Symons visited, Venice was one of his favourite places. I focus on Symons's understanding of the representation of the East and the West, which supports his cosmopolitan view in his travel essays on Venice written between 1894 and 1897. These were first published in the *Saturday Review* (9 November 1901) as 'The Soul of Venice'. After revisions, these were included as 'Venice' in *Cities* (1903) and *Cities of Italy* (1907). As a multilingual critic, Symons was always quick to catch on to the latest trends in foreign art and literature, energetically introducing what interested him. There is no evidence that Symons referred to himself as a cosmopolitan; he did not even directly use the term in reference to other figures. However, interestingly, cosmopolitan aspects that are fully applicable to the latest discussion on cosmopolitanism are certainly apparent in his travel essays. Symons's travel essays cannot be evaluated solely for his impressionistic sketches, although they were a significant feature of his literature. His 'Venice' surely exhibits an example of a Victorian writer who had both a keen awareness of the fictiveness of Western Orientalism and a cosmopolitan eye with which to gaze upon the world

as a hybrid beauty.

Chapter 2

A Flâneur Poet in London

This chapter examines Symons's representation of London in his poems from the 1890s in *London: A Book of Aspects* (1908), focusing on his aesthetic as a flâneur poet, in order to explore how his cosmopolitanism is reflected in the description of the metropolitan cityscape. As opposed to the quiet reception of his travel essays and short fictions, *London Nights* (1895) attracted public attention immediately after its publication, announcing his name as a decadent poet. The series of writings on London reflect his shifting views towards this city, beginning with his young passion to be established in London. Under both international and domestic literary influences, Symons was attracted to the aesthetic of flânerie. To express his experiences in poetry, he employs a style he later called 'impressionistic writing'. With this rapid sketching style, Symons's poems vividly recreate the moments that attract his eyes. These short but colourful pieces allow

readers to view and experience flânerie in a virtual *fin-de-siècle* London. However, while these pieces that represent snapshots of urban experiences have an impressive visual effect, one might ask whether they could deliver a powerful message about the poet, his ideology, or his world view.

Symons finds and praises the urban hybridity that enlivens the cityscape of London filled with diverse lives, instead of ostensibly exhibiting one aspect of the city experience.

Just as the image taken by a photographer is not a miniature slice of reality because it inevitably reflects the photographer's stylistic choices, a poem written by a flâneur poet also reflects the subjectivity with which the poet sees the cityscape. The possibility of aesthetic cosmopolitanism can surely be found in Symons's flâneur literature, inviting us to see the cityscape differently as a selected image of the diversity of human life.

Chapter 3

Periodical Venture of *The Savoy*: Cosmopolitan Literary Space towards *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*

This chapter analyses Symons's editorship of *The Savoy* (January 1896–December 1896) from the viewpoint that this magazine is a crucial example that Symons put his cosmopolitanism into practice as an editorial policy, whose experience brought turned *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899:1919) into a mature form of cosmopolitan literature. Due to its short publication period, *The Savoy* has long been regarded as a less-important episode in the discussion of his career, an unfruitful challenge to a young editor in spite of his enthusiasm. In order to grasp his cosmopolitanism further, shedding a new light on his enthusiastic devotion to *The Savoy* is crucial, not only to correct the unjustly poor reception of the magazine and his editorship, but also to re-evaluate the link between the hitherto most-ignored *The Savoy* and the most-famous *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. Symons was associated as a leading figure for this magazine from its launch to end. In this position, he created a cosmopolitan literary intersection for new talents, aiming for this periodical venture to be accepted largely and gain new readership. Regrettably, Symons's passion and sincere attempts were not rewarded commercially, but it should be highlighted

that Symons established a literary cosmopolitan space, setting its pages as the stage of a lively exchange of various talents, without questioning the contributor's nationality, school, or public notoriety. While Symons and the editorial board could not survive the competitive publishing market in the 1890s, Symons's effort and experience during *The Savoy's* publication should not be concluded as a failure, as it was surely an essential rehearsal for the publication of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, one of the most influential anthologies of literary criticism, inspiring then-younger talents internationally towards new possibilities of literature. In the evaluation of Symons's international contribution, *The Savoy* and *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* should be regarded as a set, for both of them equally reveal his cosmopolitanism, albeit in different ways. In the process of analysing the editorial policy by Symons and the causes of the sudden ending of the magazine in spite of the editorial board's careful risk management, it seems *The Savoy* inevitably represents the difficulty of inventing an ideal cosmopolitan space welcomed by everyone, revealing the fragility of such an ambition.

Chapter 4

The Ambivalence of Cosmopolitanism and Symons: Rereading *Spiritual Adventures*

Finally, in this chapter, I will discuss Symons's book of short fiction, *Spiritual Adventures* (1905), from the viewpoint that Symons reveals his sense of ambivalence on cosmopolitanism. In chapters 1 and 2, I have focused on his favourable gaze upon the diversity of human lives as the significant feature of his cosmopolitanism. In chapter 3, Symons's struggle to realise a cosmopolitan literary space in the form of the periodical is exhibited. However, it does not mean that Symons optimistically believed that we are all able to communicate with each other as world citizens without difficulties. While he is able to aestheticize solitude among multitudes as a metropolitan poet who prioritises urban mobility, it seems he cannot ignore a sense of detachment of his own, which might be interpreted as melancholy. In *Spiritual Adventures,* Symons incorporates water imagery, which, in all stories, collectively exhibits images of the fluidity of life, highlighting each character who always feels a sense of detachment from others. Symons's sincere approach to this concern as an author would contribute to the

amelioration of the hitherto unjust reception of this book.

From travel essays to poems, his editorship for the periodical to his anthology of short stories, Symons's cosmopolitanism appears in his own way—with a voice to invite us to see the world from a new perspective, one where every individual can coexist, side by side, without losing her/his own identity. Such a humble cosmopolitanism cannot bring dramatic, rapid change to the world view. However, in a longer span, it will not be powerless. He demonstrates the possibility of aesthetic cosmopolitanism to the future, rewriting the stereotypical image of Victorian literature as the representation of Western imperialism.

Chapter 1

Wanderer's Literature: The Cosmopolitan Eye of Arthur Symons

What kind of 'cosmopolitanism' can be found in Symons, who was active between the end of the 19th century and the early 20th century? Whilst acknowledging that Symons's literary contribution was international with his multilingual ability (English, French, Italian, Spanish, German and Romany), is this enough for us to consider him as 'cosmopolitan' figure instead of an 'international'? Looking at the historical background, Julia Prewitt-Brown regards the nineteenth-century *fin-de-siècle* as a period of 'flourishing transnational contacts in science and the arts', that 'the spirit of cosmopolitanism was beginning to flourish'[14] and that cosmopolitanism developed in the decades before and after historic events such as the Great Exhibitions in London (1851) and Paris (1855, 67, 78, 89 and 1900). Moreover, Grace Brockington observes that individuals need institutions if their cosmopolitanism is to be more than a private affair: 'in

[14], Julia Prewitt Brown, *Cosmopolitan Criticism: Oscar Wilde's Philosophy of Art*, (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1999), p.29.

the late nineteenth century, and particularly before the First World War, international institutions proliferated, creating infrastructure of societies, journals, and conferences and exhibitions'.[15] It is worth noting that the idea of the League of Nations was moot before the First World War, as it was the war which ensured its foundation.[16] Cultural practitioners created their own organizations to support and disseminate their work, and to give them a point of contact with like-minded cosmopolitans.

The British Empire from 1815–1914 contributed to creating a dichotomy of imperialism and cosmopolitanism, as if the adjective 'cosmopolitan' were a fashionable, somewhat convenient label for an intellectual person who enjoys the international, cultural interaction of the age. However, as Daniel Laqua and Christophe Verbruggen point out, 'internationalism' is a more appropriate label for such international exchanges, rather than 'cosmopolitanism', because the latter is sometimes linked to the acceptance of universal values.[17] As Pratap Bhanu

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15 Grace Brockington, 'Introduction', *Internationalism and the Arts in Britain and Europe at the Fin de Siècle*, (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009), P.19.

16 Ibid. P. 19.

17 Daniel Laqua and Christophe Verbruggen, 'Beyond Paris and London: Symbolism as a Transnational Literary Movement', 'Abstracts: Fin-de-Siècle Cosmopolitanism: A Workshop Conference', (4 July 2011, University of Leeds).

Mehta observes, 'cosmopolitanism is a protean term with a complex history'.[18] Since the time of Diogenes the Cynic, the Greek Stoics and later Kant, many studies have discussed 'cosmopolitanism' in various fields and contexts, which makes it quite difficult to achieve a solid definition. Whilst these philosophers and scholars have been duly conscious of the Greek origin of the word 'cosmopolitan'—the *kosmo polites* (world citizen) proclaimed by Diogenes—the concept has been interpreted and developed from the past to the present. Ever since Zeno of Citium represented a more positive version of Diogenes's 'universal citizenship' in which 'we should regard all men as fellow-citizens and local residents, and there should be one way of life and order, like that of a herd grazing together and nurtured by a common law', establishing a humanist brotherhood of all mankind,[19] this stream of thought has continued. As seen in the concept of cosmopolitanism crossing various interdisciplinary fields from the end of the twentieth century to the twenty-first century, scholars have tried to renew the interpretation in the age of globalization, which has led to the current

[18] Pratap Bhanu Mehta, 'Cosmopolitanism and the Circle of Reason', *Political Theory* 28 [5], (2000), p.620.
[19] Garrett Wallace Brown and David Held, 'Editors' Introduction', *The Cosmopolitanism Reader*, eds. by Garrett Wallace Brown and David Held (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010) p.4.

reconsiderations of what cosmopolitanism truly means. Thus, considering the unsettled circumstance that brought about the variants of cosmopolitanism, using the term only to describe someone who is conversant with all things foreign is problematic, and more careful attention should be paid to the concept.

To grasp the cosmopolitanism in Symons, this chapter first focuses on Symons's background as a 'wanderer', exploring the background of his travelling style, or the aesthetic of the 'nomadic life' that characterizes his literature. The origin of Symons's lifelong aspiration to visit unknown, foreign countries as if he were incessantly encouraged to tread all over the world should be explored before discussing his travel essays that reveal his aesthetic as a borderless wanderer.

Among the foreign cities Symons visited, Venice was one of his favourite places, as he wrote the most travel essays on this city. The history of the republic of Venice as an intersection of the East and the West must have attracted him, for its eclectic style of architecture and cultural legacy reflects the fact that the city survived continuous threats of invasion since before 421, while flourishing as a trading place with Muslims. Not only Symons but also many other Victorian writers were attracted to Venice, such as John Ruskin, Margaret Oliphant and

Henry James. Comparing their works and Symons's representation of the city, I focus on how Symons's describes Venice as where the East and the West coexist, which reflects his cosmopolitan view. His travel essays on Venice written between 1894 and 1897 were first published in the *Saturday Review* (9 November 1901) as 'The Soul of Venice'. After revisions, these were included as 'Venice' in *Cities* (1903) and *Cities of Italy* (1907).

As a multilingual critic, Symons was always quick to catch on to the latest trends in foreign art and literature, energetically introducing what interested him. There is no evidence that Symons referred to himself as a cosmopolitan, nor did he directly use the term in reference to other figures. However, cosmopolitan aspects that are fully applicable to the latest discussion on cosmopolitanism are certainly apparent in his travel essays.

Compared to his poems and the criticism that heightened his position in literary history, it seems his travel essays have been received as less important, yet they achieve an impressionistic sketch of places and a mature representation of the foreign. As John M. MacKenzie claims in *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (1995), after the highly influential book *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said,

it seems Orientalism lost its status as a sympathetic concept of diverse and exotic cultures and became the literary means of creating a stereotypical and mythic East through which European rule could be more readily asserted.[20] Since the 1980s, this predominance in Victorian literature has often been read in a post-colonial context as the representation of Western imperialism, an emblem of domination and a weapon of power.[21] Said's *Orientalism* was so influential, as MacKenzie points out, that it 'stimulated an extraordinarily extensive debate, mainly among literary critics, which has drawn on all the principal intellectual movements of the late twentieth century'.[22] MacKenzie's book aims to exhibit the positive aspects of Orientalism as a beneficial cultural interaction, in contrast to Said, who aimed to disclose the negative aspects of Orientalism as a representation of the dichotomy of a superior West and inferior East.

Symons's travel essays should not be evaluated only for his impressionistic sketches. His 'Venice' exemplifies him as a Victorian writer who had both a keen awareness of the fictiveness of Western Orientalism and a

[20] John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), p.xii.
[21] Ibid., pp. xii- xiii.
[22] Ibid., pp. xii.

cosmopolitan eye with which to gaze upon the world as a hybrid beauty.

The Aesthetic of the Nomadic Life

As Lawrence Markert points out, 'the art of travel' is one of the most important aspects in Symons's literature.[23] However, in Symons's case, 'wandering' might be a more appropriate word for his style of travel. He preferred travelling without a solid purpose and without guidebooks, regarding them as a 'necessary evil';[24] he always departed with the expectation that new spectacles and experiences were waiting for him in unknown places.

To discuss Symons's travelling style and cosmopolitanism, the origin of the term 'cosmopolitan' in the statements of Diogenes the Cynic comes to mind.[25] Diogenes exalts the freedom to visit anywhere in the world as a cosmopolitan

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[23] Lawrence W. Markert, *Arthur Symons: Critic of the Seven Arts* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988), p. xi.
[24] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: JM Dent, New York: EP Dutton, 1903), p.63.
[25] Garrett Wallace Brown and David Held, 'The origins of contemporary cosmopolitan thought', *The Cosmopolitanism Reader*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), p.4.

without borders; this formed one of the fundamental concepts of cosmopolitanism: the right to visit. Although Zeno and the Stoics inherited the cosmopolitan right to visit from Diogenes, they insist that a cosmopolitan should not abandon their local identification and should responsibly belong both to a smaller community and to the world. Diogenes refuses to belong to one place as a local resident, even when he is kindly invited to settle there by the local inhabitants. Instead of the freedom to travel without restriction, it seems Diogenesian cosmopolitanism must imply a kind of solitude because, in this, the cosmopolitan abandons the comfort of having a home and becoming a local, as if an eternal wanderer of the world.

As the titles of Symons's travel essays reveal—from Rome, Seville, Prague, Moscow, Budapest, Belgrade and Sofia to Constantinople—during the active years of his career, he visited a myriad of destinations, as if he were incessantly urged to travel. However, it might be somewhat surprising to learn that for such an experienced traveller, Symons didn't visit a foreign country until 1889 at the age of 24. The guide for his first international trip was Havelock Ellis (1859–1939). Regarding a trip to Paris with Symons in September 1889, Ellis

recalls that

> He [Symons] had never been to Paris or out of England before, and was pleased to be under my wing. He had, indeed, never left the roof of his father, a Puritanical Wesleyan minister, and at Paris I introduced him, for the first time, to wine and cigarettes.[26]

Symons had a domestic life under the patronage of his parents up to that point. However, Symons's childhood was not strongly bound to one local place, partly due to the profession of his father. His family never stayed in one place for a long period, as ministers were assigned for no more than three years to one post. Between 1865 and 1885, Symons's father was in charge of nine different circuits; therefore, the family moved often.[27] When Symons was only one year old, the family moved from Milford Haven, Wales, to the island of Guernsey; two years

[26] Havelock Ellis, *My Life* (London: Neville Spearman, 1940), p.203.
[27] Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi, *Dark Passages: The Decadent Consciousness in Victorian Literature* (Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p.100.

later, they moved to Alnwick, Northumberland, and then to St. Ives in Cornwall.[28] As Karl Beckson observes, 'The emotional and psychological effect of these constant moves on the young Symons was profound'.[29] Symons later tries to analyse his own childhood in 'A Prelude to Life' (1905).

> If I have been a vagabond, and I have never been able to root myself in any one place in the world, it is because I have no early memories of any one sky or soil. It has freed me from many prejudices in giving me its own unresting kind of freedom; but it has cut me off from whatever is stable, of long growth in the world.[30]

Symons must have been strongly conscious of the lack of local identity from an early age. At the same time, he was able to nurture his adoration of

[28] Miyazawa Shinichi lists the constant moves of Symons's family in detail and illustrates the circuit route in the map, in 'The Budding Madness of Arthur Symons (1)', *The Kagoshima Keidai Ronshu: The Studies on the Social and Cultural Sciences*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1978), pp.131-153.
[29] Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p.7.
[30] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.4.

foreign countries through reading. Together with Cervantes's *Don Quixot*e, George Borrow's *Lavengro* occupied a special place for young Symons.

> The reading of *Lavengro* did many things for me. It absorbed me from the first page, with a curiously personal appeal, as of someone akin to me, and when I came to the place where Lavengro learns Welsh in a fortnight, I laid down the book with a feeling of fierce emulation. I had often thought of learning Italian: I immediately bought an Italian Bible and a grammar; I worked all day long, not taking up *Lavengro* again, until, at the end of the fortnight which I had given myself, I could read Italian. Then I finished *Lavengro*.[31]

It is understandable that a young reader could easily be absorbed into the story of a book, casting himself as the hero. But, in Symons's case, the degree of his absorption into the literary world seems to have been extraordinarily intense, as if

[31] Ibid., p.21.

he were competing with his rival in the classroom. For Symons, characters in books had almost the same reality as he did. Symons does not hide his delightful surprise in finding 'someone akin to me' in the hero, Lavengro. They share many features: the Cornish origin of their strict fathers, multilingualism mastered with the Bible and a grammar book, scepticism about religious doctrine, a desire to commit blasphemy, a fear of punishment due to deeds against Christianity, and, above all, a lifelong attraction to travelling to new, exotic places and sympathy for the wanderers, the Gypsies. Symons writes that

> *Lavengro* took my thoughts into the open air and gave me my first conscious desire to wander. I learned a little Romany, and was always on the lookout for gypsies. I realized that there were other people in the world besides the conventional people I knew […] And I realized that there was another escape from these people besides a solitary flight in books, that if a book could be so like a man, there were men and women, after all, who had the interest of a book as well as the

warm advantage of being alive. Humanity began to exist for me.[32]

Just as Borrow writes *Lavengro* as an autobiographical novel, with 'I' as the hero of the story, Symons also writes of his childhood in his essay 'A Prelude to Life' (1905). Some exaggeration or dramatization may be found, for example, in the genius episode of Symons's mastering Italian in a fortnight, but by considering it a result of his feelings of rivalry with Lavengro who 'learns Welsh in a fortnight',[33] such a lapse seems to have been highly realistic for Symons. As a result of such intensive absorption into literary space,[34] a blurring of reality/imagination, it can be said that Symons had already travelled to many foreign places through reading, and that this also helped him to master foreign languages,[35] including French, Italian, Spanish and Romany. For Symons,

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[32] Ibid., p.21.
[33] Ibid.,p.21.
[34] This aspect persisted, even after Symons became a professional critic. In 'The Perfect Critic' (1920) T.S. Eliot does not hide his surprise about Symons's absorption into the written scene of a play.
[35] Symons writes: 'French and Latin I picked up easily, Greek with more difficulty. German I was never able to master' in 'A Prelude to Life' (1905), but he actually published translation of Hugo von Hofmannsthal's *Electra: A Tragedy in One Act* from German into English (New York: Brentano's, 1908).

reading certain books actually guided him to unknown foreign lands, introducing him to characters much like himself. He admits, 'I got my first taste of a sort of gypsy element in literature which was to become a passion';[36] Gypsies were always attractive wanderers for Symons, directing Symons's eye to the nomadic life.

Symons did not hide his lifelong enthusiasm for Gypsies, contributing to the journal of the Gypsy Lore Society and frequently using a 'Gypsy' theme in poems and translations.[37] In 1949, a Gypsy lorist, Dora Yates, quoted Symons's essay 'In Praise of Gypsies' to plead with her American readers to treat Gypsies with 'decency and respect' and, above all, to protect them from extinction in the wake of their decimation by the Nazis. Symons's affectionate sympathy and respect for Gypsies abound.

> The Gypsy represents Nature before Civilization. He is the wanderer whom all of us who are poets or love the wind are

[36] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', *Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 21.
[37] Edward Baugh, 'Arthur Symons' "Slovak Gypsy," A "New" Translation', *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920* (9:1, 1966), pp.21-22.

summed up in. He does what we dream. He is the last romance left in the world. His is the only free race.[38]

Symons exhibits antagonism towards industrialized utilitarian society and finds the last hope in Gypsies who live as poets of a nomadic life, much like Arthur Rimbaud whose 'revolt seems to be against civilization itself, as he disappears into the deserts of Africa'.[39]

Since his first meeting with them in literature, Gypsies encouraged young Symons to depart 'toward a new-born to-morrow' and 'into a world of unknown faces'.[40] At the same time, as Deborah Epstein Nord observes, Symons's praise of Gypsies actually seems to be a 'defense'[41] for those who choose to live the nomadic life, which is an ideal lifestyle for the person with artistic temperament. As Lyon points out, there was a trend of Gypsy literature in the period.

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[38] The essay titled 'In Praise of Gypsies' first appeared in *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 1 (April 1908), pp.294-299. Reprinted: *Bookman's Journal*, 4 (July 22, 1921), pp.205-206.
[39] Symons, 'Arthur Rimbaud', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: EP Dutton, 1958), p.37.
[40] Symons, 'The Wanderers', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons: Volume 1. Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924) p.296.
[41] Deborah Epstein Nord, *Gypsies and the British Imagination 1807-1930* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), p.137.

> Several scholars of the modern period have also noted the indebtedness of the so-called 'open-air' or 'tramping' movement to nineteenth-century romantic accounts of the travelling 'Gypsy' life. Rooted in a growing urban nostalgia for an imagined rural past and fueled by the popular narratives of George Borrow and others who called themselves Romany Rye (or 'gentleman friends' of 'Gypsies'), 'tramping' and 'caravanning' became something of a national recreational pursuit in the 1880s and afterwards.[42]

According to Lyon, the 'Gypsy' restlessness of writers who were as diverse as Symons, writers such as D. H. Lawrence and John Reed, helped to form a cultural matrix, which, though fictional in its origins, nevertheless anchored a divergent community of self-identified moderns.[43] In Symons's case,

[42] Janet Lyon, 'Gadze Modernism', *Modernism/Modernity* Vol.11, Iss. 3, (September 2004), p.189.
[43] Ibid, p.189.

he satisfied his desire to live a nomadic life with 'marvelous adaptability'[44] by travelling whenever he wanted. He was able to fit into new places and adapt himself to the new people there. With regard to this trait, W. B. Yeats recalls that Symons, 'more than any man I have ever known, could slip as it were into the mind of another', and the father of W. B. Yeats, John Butler Yeats, remembers Symons in Sligo, Ireland, where the natives 'fell in love with Arthur Symons—he is so quiet and unassuming'.[45]

In the most active years of his career, the mid-1890s, it seems Symons already regarded nomadic life aesthetically, not simply as a personal preference in terms of travelling style. As a witness, Max Beerbohm reports a memorable scene at a party of publisher Leonard Smithers that illuminates the contrast between Yeats and Symons.

> At the other end of the table, Arthur Symons was talking of some foreign city, carrying in his waistcoat-pocket, as it were, the *genius loci*, anon to be embalmed in Pateresque prose. I

[44] Ibid, p.189.
[45] Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A Life*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p.147.

forget whether this time it was Rome or Seville or Moscow or what; but I remember that the hostess said she had never been there. I liked Symons feigning some surprise at this, and for saying that she really ought to go. Presently I heard him saying he thought the nomadic life was the best of all lives for an artist. Yeats, in a pause of his own music, heard this too, and seemed a little pained by it. Shaking back the lock from his brow, he turned to Symons and declared that an artist worked best among his own folk and in the land of his fathers. Symons seemed rather daunted, but he stuck to his point. He argued that new sights and sounds and odours braced the whole intelligence of a man and quickened his powers of creation. Yeats, gently but firmly, would have none of this. His own arguments may not have been better than Symons'; but, in voice and manner and countenance, Symons was no match for him at all. And it was a humane impulse the hostess interposed. 'Mr. Symons', she said, 'is like myself. He likes a

little change'.[46]

While the exact date of this party was uncertain, it is assumed to have been held in 1895 or 1896, according to the member who contributed to *The Savoy* magazine, which was published from January to December 1896. This reveals an interesting fact: Symons professed a nomadic life as an ideal life for an artist, which was aesthetically different from the mere admiration for Gypsies that he had in his childhood. In this aesthetic, it can be interpreted that Symons enjoyed the cosmopolitan right to travel, which is a Diogenesian form of cosmopolitanism that refuses any local identity in the nomadic life. It was a moment of conversion for Symons from a negative complex that 'I have never been root myself in any one place', to the positive interpretation that 'rootlessness' is a privilege for a critic 'freed from any prejudices' and brings an 'unresting kind of freedom'[47]. Simultaneously, the concept partakes of the sense of being a privileged person, as if it were an essential condition for the cosmopolitan connoisseur who travels

[46] Max Beerbohm, *From The Third Programme*, ed. John Morris (London: Nonesuch Press, 1956), pp.158-159.
[47] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.4.

without borders for the new discoveries and excitement in foreign places.

This portrait of a cosmopolitan reminds me of the conceptualization of such a person in Said's *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (1983). Said argues of the ideal model of the intellectual person that

> The man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land.[48]

Unlike Symons, Said holds an internationally complex background. He was a Palestinian scholar born in Jerusalem and received education in Western countries. His consciousness of his own identity would have involved him in the discussion of the peaceful resolution of the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, which is still unsettled. With regard to this sincere struggle for a better future, even Mackenzie, who refutes Said's *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism* in his

[48] Edward Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.7.

book, does not hide his respect for Said, stating that 'His [Said's] cultural interests, his scholarly good manners, and his striving for international understanding, if sometimes bordering on a naïve cosmopolitanism, are admirable'.[49] As Said regards the perfect condition for the intellectual as the ability to see the entire world as a foreign land, it seems Symons and Said share the same ideal on this point: being ideally free from the bondage of one's identity, or a homeland. This positive view of rootlessness might be one Said aimed to acquire, coinciding with Symons's praise of the nomadic life. For Symons, a rootless background was already a reality, and he positively interpreted his own rootlessness to justify his aspirations to travel to unknown places for the aesthetic because he believed it could give him a way to see the world freed from any prejudices, thus allowing him to view the spectacle in front of him with fresh excitement.

The Fantasy of 'Oriental'

[49] John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory and the Arts* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. xix.

Like many European tourists who expect exotic views in foreign lands, it was a great pleasure for Symons to find new sights, especially where he could experience the contrast between the East and the West. As a fervent student of Pater, Symons shares Pater's conceptualization of the East and the West. In *Nietzsche in Anglosaxony*, Patrick Bridgwater discusses the ways that Pater distinguishes between 'European' (or 'centripetal') and 'Asiatic' (or 'centrifugal') art forms, which are indeed associated with Apollo and Dionysus, respectively.[50] As Bridgwater observes, there is no evidence that Pater was influenced by Nietzsche's analysis of the 'Apollonian-Dionysian duality' as written in *The Birth of Tragedy* (however, Pater published an essay, 'A Study of Dionysus'. in 1876, which suggests that he might have read Nietzsche's 1872 German work). In this dualism, the philosophical calmness of Apollo opposes the titanic-barbaric nature of Dionysus. This dichotomy is also often a part Symons's works, from poems to travel writings: the Apollonian West and the Dionysian East.

Symons probably first encountered Nietzsche's works through his editorship of *The Savoy,* the first magazine to introduce Nietzsche in English

[50] Patrick Bridgwater, *Nietzsche in Anglosaxony*, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1972), p.23.

through serial essays[51] by Havelock Ellis in 1896. From then on, Symons expressed strong sympathy with Nietzsche, saying, 'I never take up Nietzsche without the surprise of something familiar'.[52] Symons shares his view of the East and the West with Pater, possibly by way of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*.

In poems written in the 1890s included in *Silhouettes* (1892) or *London Nights* (1895), Symons frequently employs 'Dionysian' images to represent exotic Oriental motifs such as female dancers with veils who expose themselves in climactic excitement in an ecstatic trance. For example, in 'Javanese Dancers',[53] Symons portrays the ecstasy generated by the whirling music and repeated rhythm and the movement of the 'amber-coloured' dancers who step like cats with 'fixed eyes', which is Symons's favourite metaphor for describing an Oriental characteristic. The feverish excitement of pagan ritual, animalistic/barbaric desire, indolence with glittering splendour—such an array of imagery of the 'Orient' weaved by Europeans was not unique to Symons but were common tropes both in

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[51] Havelock Ellis, 'Friedrich Nietzsche -- I', *The Savoy* No.2 (April 1896), pp.79-94, 'Friedrich Nietzsche --II', *The Savoy* No.3 (July 1896), pp. 68-81, and *The Savoy* No.4 (August 1896), pp.57-63.

[52] Symons, 'Nietzsche on Tragedy', *Plays, Acting and Music*, (London: Dukworth and Co., 1903), p.9.

[53] Symons, 'Javanese Dancers', 'Silhouettes', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Vol.1* (London: Martin Secker, 1924) p.125.

the visual art and literary scene in nineteenth-century Europe; examples include Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's *Grande Odalisque* (1814) and Gustave Flaubert's *Salammbô* (1862).

The Oriental motif was also popular as a fashionable movement in interior design in Europe, such as *Chinoiserie* or *Japonisme*. Among the notable figures that developed this movement in England, the names of James Abbott McNeill Whistler or Oscar Wilde might be remembered for their use of items and artworks from Japan to embellish their lives with an Oriental flair. Symons also enjoyed this trend privately, if not publicly like Wilde or Whistler. A Japanese scholar and translator of English literature, Hisao Honma (1886–1981) reports that he found a pair of Japanese screens and many wood-block prints on the wall in Symons's study when he visited Symons's residence in 1928, thanks to a reference letter by Edward Gordon Craig. At Waseda University in Tokyo, he was teaching English literature and published Japanese translations of Oscar Wilde, William Morris, Ellen Karolina Sofia Key and Harriet Elizabeth Beecher Stowe. They chatted about Japanese Ukiyo-e artists, such as Utamaro or Eizan, and Honma recalls the room where various items and artworks coexisted from all over

the world, items like Japanese wooden dolls, a French impressionist Monet painting, a Chinese vase, and Japanese screens.[54]

With regard to the representation of the Orient crafted by Europe during the period, we are now able to analyse it from various perspectives, thanks to several mid-twentieth-century studies that attempted to dissect this phenomenon. In 1972, in *Orientalism*, Said tried to redefine the term 'Orientalism' as a form of European understanding of the Orient, stating that 'an image of the word Orient has a considerable and interesting cultural resonance in the West', and 'the Orient that appears in Orientalism' is 'a system of representations framed by a whole set of forces that brought the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness, and later, Western empire'.[55] In 1983, Benedict Anderson explored the definition of a nation, stating that it was 'imagined' as a community[56] and, in 1970, Roland Barthes published an anthology of essays on Japan, entitled *Empire of Signs*. He starts this book with a careful preface, calling Japan a 'fictive nation', and

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[54] Hisao Honma, *Taiou Inshou-ki* [*Impressions of Europe*], (Tokyo: Tokyo-dou, 1929), p.48.
[55] Edward W. Said, 'Orientalism Now', *Orientalism*, (London: Penguin, 2003), pp.202-203.
[56] Benedict Anderson, 'Introduction: Concepts and Definitions', *Imagined Community*, (London and NY: Verso, 2006), p.7.

proclaims that he never tries to represent or analyse reality itself, as he is 'not lovingly gazing toward an Oriental essence'.[57]

These scholars have all approached the topic from their own backgrounds and fields of research to explore the notion of the East and the West from different critical perspectives. However, it should be noted that some Victorian writers were also conscious of the fictive nature of 'Oriental' in the Western context. For example, in 'The Decay of Lying', which first appeared in *The Nineteenth Century* (January 1889) and was later revised and included in *Intentions* (1891), Wilde has Vivian say, 'The Japanese people are the deliberate self-conscious creation of certain individual artists […] In fact, the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people'.[58] Vivian cites an example of an artist who travelled to Japan.

> One of our most charming painters went recently to the Land of Chrysanthemum in the foolish hope of seeing the

[57] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, trans. by Richard Howard, (NY: Hill and Wang,1983), p.3.
[58] Oscar Wilde, 'The Decay of Lying', *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde Volume IV: Criticism*, ed. by Josephine M. Guy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.97-.

> Japanese.[59] All he saw, all he had the chance of painting, were a few lanterns and some fans […] He did not know that the Japanese people are, as I have said, simply a mode of style, an exquisite fancy of art.[60]

This reveals that Wilde was then fully conscious of the fictive nature of the representation of the East in Western art. Symons also demonstrates this consciousness, though without Wilde's witty eloquence. In 'Venice', before Symons starts his detailed impressionistic sketch about the city where 'the East and the West have an equal share', he writes,

> You are reminded of the East at every step; yet, after all, its interest is precisely that it is not Eastern, that it is really of the

[59]However, according to his letters, it seems Wilde was planning a trip to Japan in 1882. i.e.: 'now I think of going to Japan' (To Helen Sickert, 25 April 1882), 'I feel an irresistible desire to wander, and go to Japan' (To Mrs George Lewis, 3 June 1882), or 'When will you come to Japan?' (To JM Whistler, June 1882). See Rupert Hart-Davis, ed, *The Letters of Oscar Wilde* (London : Rupert Hart-Davis, 1962)

[60] Oscar Wilde, 'The Decay of Lying', *The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde Volume IV: Criticism*, ed. by Josephine M. Guy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.97- 98.

> West, and that it has given a new touch of the fantastic to the fantasy which we call Oriental, an arrangement of lines and colours which, in its own country, has a certain air of being at home, but which, out of its country, frankly admits itself barbaric, a bastard.[61]

This short paragraph reveals that, like Wilde, Symons also understood that the so-called 'Oriental' is a creation of Western imagination—a 'fantasy'. The more intriguing fact is that while exhibiting their awareness of the fictive nature of the representation of the Orient, they did not stop employing an Oriental motif, but used it even more aggressively in their works. This attitude makes it seem as if they are giving careful notice to their audience that 'this is a work of fiction—an artistic imagery given by an artist' before inviting them into to the crafted visions of Oriental fantasy. As Wilde's *Salome* (1891; 1894) and Symons's poems such as 'The Dance of the Seven Sins' (*Images of Good and Evil*, 1899) or 'The Andante of Snakes' (*The Fool of the World*, 1906) reveal, they willingly dealt

[61] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities*, (London: J.M. Dent and Co., 1903), pp.68-69.

with the Oriental motif within their art to weave the vision of the enigmatic splendour of the Orient with their pens, which is understood as an aesthetic attitude for an artist.

Since Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), it seems that the opportunities to read Victorian literature as examples of the ambitions of Western imperialism have increased. As Said started his academic career in the study of English literature, he was able to examine a wide range of writers to discuss in his books. However, as Toshiro Inoue points out, it seems Said carefully avoids some writers who do not offer effective examples by which to make his book more persuasive for the purpose of revealing imperial Orientalism as a representation of the colonizer/colonized dichotomy of the time.[62] Following mainstream European literature, Said does not forget to discuss modernist writers as well in his book. Yet, to achieve his purpose of exhibiting the dichotomy of the colonial period effectively, Said chooses the Irish modernists W. B. Yeats and James Joyce. Said regards these writers as good examples of those

[62] Toshiro Inoue, 'The Existence of Modernism and the Absence of Pound: The Views from E. W. Said' [in Japanese] *Ezra Pound Review*, No. 8-9, (September 2006), pp.37-50.

who support the decolonization of Ireland; therefore, their works are applicable to this cosmopolitanism.

From this perspective, it is clear why Said does not examine American cosmopolitan writers, such as T. S. Eliot or Ezra Pound, in detail. The works of these modernists are less applicable to Said's purpose, as they were not refugees from colonized places and their writings do not reflect patriarchal aspirations to realize the decolonization of their home country. American expatriate writers might have left their homes due to a sense of weariness with their culturally stagnant circumstances, but the primary reason for their departure was their positive interest in seeking new cultural influences for artistic purposes.

Thus, the omission of Symons and Wilde from Said's works is also understandable, as their awareness of Orientalism as a Western creation and their remarks concerning its fictive nature must have made them complicated figures for Said. Even if Said tried to display the vigorous use of the Oriental motif through examples of Victorian intellectuals who helped promote Western Orientalism, it must have been difficult to connect Symons's aesthetic desire to the West's imperialistic ambition to colonize the East. It is hard to find a line that

suggests an intention of influencing others with different cultures in Symons's works. As his travel essays reveal, he never tried to label Western culture as 'superior' when in foreign lands, but he willingly adjusted himself to the ways of the local people there, even though such trials were not always successful and often inconvenient for him as a result. Instead, it is obvious that Symons enjoyed the inconveniences caused by these differences in cultures. When he visited an economically depressed area of Venice, instead of describing the inhabitants' lives with a pitying gaze, Symons chose to sketch the local life as a delightfully colourful snapshot.

> A Part of Venice that I like, not because it is attractive in itself, but because it is so unlike the show Venice and so like a fishing village, with its smell of the sea and ships, is the Via Garibaldi, which runs from Veneta Marina past the Public Gardens. […] Some of the children are bare-footed, for the people about here are a little more sordid in their poverty than in most parts of Venice, though without that air of depression

> which I have noticed in the Canareggio quarter. […] I have often sat here, intently idle, watching everyone who passes me […] I hear at every moment the slip-slop of heelless shoes dragging their way along the pavement, and catch a glimpse of the heels of brilliant stockings, red, striped, white, occasionally a fine, ecclesiastical purple; now a whole flock of greenish yellow shawls passes, then, by itself, a bright green shawl, a grey, a blue, an amber; and scarcely two of all these coloured things are alike: the street flickers with colour, in the hot sunshine.[63]

There is no miserable tone here because Symons noticed people who were enjoying their lives in their own ways. Near the Rialto, which abounded with merchants, porters and beggars around the stalls, Symons admits 'they were terribly dirty' but finds a certain kind of dignity in them.

[63]Symons, 'Venice', *Cities*, (London: J.M. Dent and Co., 1903), pp.76-78.

> I noticed particularly a group of five old women, with turbaned heads and a century of winkles, and another group of eleven *facchini* and beggars, some of whom were very old men, with tattered, yet still dignified cloaks, huge brigandish hats, their bright red stockings showing like an ornament through the gaps in their boots. They were terribly dirty; but in Venice, where everything has its own way of becoming beautiful, dirt, at the right distance, gives a fine tone of to an old face, like those faces that we see in the Michelangelo, wrinkled like a withered apple, tanned to a sombre red, and set in the shadow of long grey hair and beard. Dirt, on such a face, a kind of weather-stain, has that dignity which dirt, in England, gives to an old ruin. Here the old ruin is the beggar-man, and he is not less picturesque, not less dignified, than any castle in England.[64]

[64] Ibid., p.76.

Citing Matthew Arnold's 'The Sick King in Bokhara'—'though we take what we desire, we must not snatch it eagerly'—Symons writes 'it needs no enforcement in Venice' and observes of the style of trading here that 'everyone takes what he wants; but he takes it gently, gracefully, as a matter of course. Your cigars belong to your gondolier as much as to yourself; and if he has two oranges, one of them is yours'.[65] While reporting on their lives and those who want only what they really need to sustain their lives, Symons enjoys his stay here without forcing the manner in which he was used to living.

This is the manner of travel for Symons and of his aesthetic as well. Symons also finds that all are satisfied with the much slower pace of life in Venice, and he uncovers the 21st-century spirit of 'fair trade' already in the 1890s. Together with his desire to find exotic views in foreign lands, Symons's travel essays exhibit both respect and affection towards the local inhabitants of the places he visits.

[65] Ibid., p.87.

Incompatible Cosmopolitanism for Symons: Derrida and Hannerz

In his travel essays, the pleasure of visiting foreign lands is owed to his respect for the diversity of lives there and the fresh excitement in the new spectacles that catch his eyes. For these reasons, it may already be possible to dub him a cosmopolitan connoisseur who proudly enjoys the right to visit unknown places. However, to identify the cosmopolitanism in Symons, it should also be noted that his cosmopolitan aspect shows certain incompatibilities with some arguments.

For instance, in *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* (2001), Jacques Derrida offers a critical examination of the Greek Stoics' cosmopolitan law and Kant's conceptualization of cosmopolitan hospitality, claiming that such includes a contradiction because it requires accepting visitors as newcomers who wish to settle in the area; however, to achieve that agreement, a 'questioning' by the locals of the visitors is inevitable, and this could undermine the universality of cosmopolitanism. Instead of the contradictory nature of 'cosmopolitan hospitality' offered in the past by the Greek Stoics, Derrida suggests the concept of

'unconditional hospitality',[66] which prohibits even the desire to question the unknown newcomer, the visitor, about his or her background or origin. This view highlights Derrida's strong sympathy for asylum-seeking refugees as 'newcomers', which often serves as a premise for contemporary discussions on cosmopolitanism. Yet, Derrida's suggestion of unconditional hospitality for 'the cities of refuge'[67] through a renewal of Kantian international law might accelerate a monotonous unification of the world, which would negate hybridity or multiculturalism in the long run. Such a unified world might lack diverse local views that come out of each region, the views Symons emphasises.

Derrida's cosmopolitanism assumes that unconditional hospitality might bring peaceful globalization and offer opportunities for borderless travel that would be open to everyone and would not involve questions concerning the background or origin of the visitor. Nevertheless, at the same time, it could lead to a homogenized view brought by innocuous globalization without vernacular characteristics, prohibiting positive curiosity about others from foreign lands.

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[66] Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans., by Mark Dooley and Richard Kearney (London: Routledge, 2001), pp.22-23.
[67] Ibid., p.4.

Symons would not be able to accept such a monotonous world, as he always expects to find diversity in the places he visits.

On the other hand, from the viewpoint of cosmopolitan mastery or competence as a 'connoisseur' with regard to alien cultures, [68] Ulf Hannerz asserts a cosmopolitanism that classifies people into two categories: 'cosmopolitan globals' and 'locals'. Hannerz interprets the relationship as 'local competence with regard to alien cultures' against 'cosmopolitan connoisseur with mastery',[69] but these also seem to be incompatible with Symons's ideal, for such an extreme dichotomy ignores the diversity of the lives and identities of those who live in ambiguous circumstances with complex backgrounds. With regard to the trans-national mobility of cosmopolitans, Hannerz also distinguishes cosmopolitans from mere tourists, stating that mobility alone cannot guarantee cosmopolitanism because tourists as 'mere spectators' are 'incompetent'.[70] As a frequent traveller and passionate spectator, Symons carefully describes the spaces where people of various identities randomly coexist, including locals, tourists,

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[68] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p.252.
[69] Ibid., pp.252-253.
[70] Ibid., p. 248.

immigrants or Gypsies in his travel essays.

For Symons, there would be no pleasure in travelling if places had no diversity. In the long description of St. Mark's in Venice, Symons exhibits his own cosmopolitan view most vividly.

Venice as 'One Vast Mosaic'

To satisfy his desire to encounter new attractive spectacles in foreign lands during his journey, Symons casts his eyes not only on landmark architecture accompanied by historical anecdotes but also on anonymous people who occupy the place. Even in one of the most popular destinations for tourists, Venice, he describes the anonymous crowd with the same passion he devotes to sketching the beautiful landmarks of the city. For Symons, people are essential components of the charm of the places he visits. In 'Venice', Symons exhibits quite a notable, cosmopolitan view, for he clearly states that he admires the hybrid multicultural space where everyone coexists without contradictions as the ideal image of the

world. However, before quickly judging this aspect in Symons as 'unique' for Victorian travellers, one should compare these descriptions of Venice with those of his contemporaries.

'Venice' by Henry James (1843–1916) was originally published in the *Century Magazine*, XXV (November 1882) and later reprinted in *Portraits of Places* (1883) and in *Italian Hours* (1905). The essay starts with the line, 'It is a great pleasure to write the word',[71] conveying the excitement of the author when visiting his favourite city, Venice. In the late-nineteenth century, Venice certainly held an irresistible charm for writers and artists. James says, 'Venice has been painted and described many thousands of times, and of all the cities of the world is the easiest to visit without going there'.[72] Among the works written on Venice in the nineteenth century, the three-volume treatise *The Stones of Venice* (1851–1853) by John Ruskin (1819–1900) has had a reputation as an authoritative study on the city by a notable scholar, a landmark work of the age. The influence was so great that probably everyone who planned to publish a book on this city must

[71] Henry James, ed. by John Auchard, *Italian Hours* (London: Penguin Books, 1995), p.7.
[72] Ibid., p.7.

have referred to Ruskin's works. James writes that 'there is no better reading at Venice therefore, as I say, than Ruskin'.[73] Margaret Oliphant (1828–1897) frequently refers to Ruskin in *The Makers of Venice: Doges, Conquerors, Painters and Men of Letters* (1888) to describe the landscape of the historical city. She praises him, saying 'there is a beautiful description of it in the second volume of Mr. Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*'.[74] Symons also clearly expresses his respect for Ruskin, who led art criticism among the Victorian precedents. Symons states that 'the influence of Ruskin has undoubtedly been a good influence' on the connection between art and the public.[75]

While their styles of writing are varied, Ruskin, James, Oliphant and Symons all share a great attraction to the historical background of Venice, for its residue of eclectically accumulated legacy infused by Byzantine, Islamic and Christian culture since the period of the Roman Empire. Oliphant summarizes the history of Venice.

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[73] Ibid., p.8.
[74] Margaret Oliphant, *The Makers of Venice: Doges, Conquerors, Painters and Men of Letters* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888) p.54.
[75] Symons, *Studies on Modern Painters* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1925), p.1.

> This was all which the rapid observer could find in the story of a power which was once supreme in the seas, the arbiter of peace and war through the difficult and dangerous East, the first defender of Christendom against the Turk, the first merchant, banker, carrier, whose emissaries were busy in all the councils and all the markets of the world.[76]

In the introduction to *The Makers of Venice*, she provides one of the reasons that Venice greatly attracted tourists: it has a uniquely symbolic role as a place for the interaction of the East and the West, with landmark architecture that represents that history. In praising one of the landmarks there, St. Mark's, Ruskin writes that

> It possesses the charm of colour in common with the greater part of the architecture, as well as of the manufactures, of the East; but Venetians deserve especial note as the only European people who

[76] Oliphant, *The Makers of Venice: Doges, Conquerors, Painters and Men of Letters* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888), p.3.

> appear to have sympathized to the full with the great instinct of the Eastern races.[77]

Symons also sees St. Mark's as a witness to the history of Venice.

> All Venice is a piece of superb, barbaric patch-work, in which the East and the West have an equal share. The lion of St. Mark's, his head and shoulders in one piece, his hind-quarters in another, is a symbol of the construction of Venice, just as the bronze horses, which have seen the downfall of the Nero, the splendours of Constantinople, and, at Paris, the First Empire, are a symbol of its history.[78]

As Symons regards St. Mark's as having 'come to be one vast mosaic in which every piece of marble is itself a precious thing, perhaps brought from the

[77] John Ruskin, 'The Stones of Venice', *The Works of John Ruskin Volume II*, ed. by E.T. Cook, (London: Gorge Allen, 1904), p.98.
[78] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: J. M. Dent & Co, 1903), p.68-69.

other end of the world, and a kind of votive offering',[79] he and Ruskin also share the same sort of literary imagination regarding each piece of stone that composes the huge building, speculating over the memory of each stone piece as if it were a witness that had observed the long, multifaceted history of humans. The minute descriptions of every detail of the 'cathedral' also reminds us of Joris-Karl Huysmans's *La Cathédrale* (1898), including the personification of minerals as if every part of tiles and stained glass starts to tell its own history to the readers. Like Huysmans, Ruskin and Symons do not simply appreciate the superficial beauty of the curved stones as the most elaborate art-piece representing the form of the age, but they also speculate on the historical background and the route each stone travelled to embellish the architecture in Venice.

However, they absolutely differ regarding their perceptions of the anonymous crowd they meet in Venice. Symons exhibits favourable attitudes about people around the landmarks, which contrasts with Ruskin and James, who harshly condemn the promiscuous crowd for spoiling the beauty and the dignity of the place. On the other hand, Oliphant's descriptions of the crowd in Venice in

[79] Ibid., p.69.

The Makers of Venice seem objective, as she carefully excludes her personal impressions. Her narrative perhaps remains somewhat novelized and fictive in tone due to the characteristics of her book that 'purveyed cultural history in a series of biographical sketches'.[80] Although she actually travelled to Venice[81] for the purposes of writing the book in 1881, it was not written as a record of her subjective impressions experienced during the journey; instead, she devotes her pen to narrate the historical events of the city like a human drama, chronologically, allowing readers to imagine the scene like a vivid, virtual reality, gaining a view of the people who lived there in the past. For example, writing about the historical moment when the French sent the envoys to Venice for the opening of the negotiations before the Fourth Crusade, Oliphant describes the scene as if she were just watching the crowd in the midst of feverish excitement, gathering in front of St. Mark's.

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[80] Elizabeth Jay, *Mrs. Oliphant: A Fiction to Herself: A Literary Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.255.

[81] In her letter dated 1st March 1881, she writes: 'I am going to Venice to prepare for a companion volume to the Florence one. I have just arranged about it, and will start in about a month, for a month's stay in that city of enchantment'. Margaret Oliphant, *Autobiography and Letters of Mrs. Margaret Oliphant*, ed. by Harry Coghill, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1974), p.295.

> It must have been a strange and imposing sight for these feudal lords to see the crowd that filled San Marco, and overflowed in Piazza, the vast trading, seafaring multitude tanned with the sunshine and the sea, full of their own importance, listening like men who had to do it, no submissive crowd of vassals, but each conscious (though, as we have seen, with but little reason) that he individually was appealed to, while those splendid petitioners knelt and wept—moved no doubt on their side by that wonderful sea of faces, by the strange circumstances, and the rising wave of enthusiasm which began to move the crowd.[82]

The crowd around St. Mark's is first described dramatically to deliver the heat of enthusiasm and confusion, enhancing the point that a significant turning point had been reached in Venice. Her narration gives the reader mingled images of the crowd, similar to a final cut of a film.

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[82] Oliphant, *The Makers of Venice: Doges, Conquerors, Painters and Men of Letters* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1888), p.76.

> This was in the winter, early in the year 1201. It is not difficult to imagine the wintry afternoon, the dim glories of the choir going off into a golden gloom behind, the lights glimmering upon the alters, the confused movement and emotion of the countless crowd, indistinct under the great arches, extending into every corner—while all the light there was concentrated in the white hair and cloth of gold of the venerable figure to which every eye was turned, standing up against the screen at the foot of the green cross.[83]

Oliphant does not ignore the anonymous crowd that equally experienced the historical moment and thus dramatically shows them in a close-up view here. This cinematic technique of describing the past with its realistic human drama endorses her as a novelist, though it is hardly possible to know what impression she had as a traveller because the description includes little of what she saw and

[83] Ibid., pp.76-77.

experienced in Venice in 1881. As Barbara Onslaw points out, 'readers are referred to a guidebook instead'[84] to get the practical information about the city.

From 1869 to 1907, Henry James visited Italy more than fourteen times, and Venice was his favourite and most frequent. In light of James's frequent travels to Venice, John Auchard suggests we should know 'how different the Italy of 1869 was from that of 1872—after the success of the Risorgimento and the unifications of the various regions of the peninsula under one government, and more or less, under one tongue'.[85] James travelled to Venice was during a period in which the region faced transition during the unification of Italy as a nation. Therefore, James's series of essays on Italy can represent a kind of documentary report written by a foreign traveller who watched the transitional period: Risorgimento 1815–1871. Auchard observes that '*Italian Hours* shows a lost face of Italy, as well as a rare view of the singular privilege of the fortunate, and wary, nineteenth-century English or American traveller who came to Europe expecting,

[84] Barbara Onslow, '"Humble Comments for the Ignorant": Margaret Oliphant's Criticism of Art and Society', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, Vol. 31, No.1, Victorian Women Editors and Critics (Spring 1998), p.62.
[85] John Auchard, 'Introduction', *Italian Hours*, by Henry James (London: Penguin Books, 1995), p. xi.

knowing, and fearing different things'.[86]

James deplores the gradually disappearing localism of Venice as a republic as the transitional unification was happening. This nostalgic attitude reveals that he adores Venice as a republic in the past. Regarding the factors that were beginning to spoil the beauty of Venice, James enumerates the crowd of tourists and street vendors, together with the harm of the superficial new 'reforms' of the architecture's ancient beauty.

> It is very true if you go, as the author of these lines on a certain occasion went, about the middle of March, a certain amount of disappointment is possible. He had paid no visit for several years, and in the interval the beautiful and helpless city had suffered an increase of injury. The barbarians are in possession and you tremble for what they may do. You are reminded from the moment of your arrival that Venice scarcely exists any more as a city at all; that she exists only as

[86]Ibid., p. xi.

> a battered peep-show and bazaar. There was a horde of savage Germans encamped in the Piazza, and they filled the Ducal Palace and the Academy with their uproar. The English and Americans came a little later. They came in good time, with a great many French, who were discreet enough to make very long repasts at the Caffè Quadri, during which they were out of the way.[87]

As a frequent visitor to and passionate admirer of Venice, James cannot stand the increase of newcomers, 'barbarians' and vendors who profited from the increase in foreign travellers.

> The months of April and May of the year 1881[88] were not, as a general thing, a favourable season for visiting the Ducal Palace and the Academy. The valet-de-place had marked them

[87] Henry James, ed. by John Auchard, *Italian Hours* (London: Penguin Books, 1995),p.12.
[88] James met Margaret Oliphant in Venice in 1881. Margaret Oliphant, *Autobiography and Letters of Mrs. Margaret Oliphant*, ed. by Harry Coghill, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1974), p.295.

> for his own and held triumphant possession on them. […] During all the spring months in Venice these gentry abound in the great resorts, and they lead their helpless captives through churches and galleries in dense irresponsible groups. They infest the Piazza; […] I had chiefly in mind the impression that assails me to-day in the whole precinct of St. Mark's. The condition of this ancient sanctuary is surely a great scandal. The peddlers and commissioners ply their trade—often a very unclean one—at the very door of the temple; they follow you across the threshold, into the sacred dusk, and pull your sleeve, and hiss into your ear, scuffling with each other for customers. There is a great deal of dishonour about St. Mark's altogether, and if Venice, as I say, has become a great bazaar, this exquisite edifice is now the biggest booth.[89]

James enhances his harsh description of the dense groups of people

[89] Henry James, ed. by John Auchard, *Italian Hours* (London: Penguin Books, 1995),p.12.

abounding in St. Mark's with words such as 'unclean' and 'infest'. He advises, 'The march of industry in united Italy must doubtlessly be looked at as a whole, and one must endeavour to believe that it is through innumerable lapses of taste that this deeply interesting country is groping her way to her place among the nations'.[90] James understands the background of the change the city was undergoing as a necessary step for unification, an inevitable worldwide phenomenon, but he still cannot hide his shock. He states, 'The restoration of the outer walls, which has lately been so much attacked and defended, is certainly a great shock. […] there is no doubt that, if a necessity it be, it is one that is deeply to be regretted'.[91] James finally admits these lengthy complaints are 'purely sentimental'.[92]

Ruskin's view of the people walking in and around St. Mark's is also quite harsh, far more so than that of James. After being astonished by the exquisite beauty of the arch, Ruskin's lengthy, detailed description vividly reflects his elevated state of mind when viewing the magnificent architecture. After an almost

[90] Ibid., p. 13.
[91] Ibid., p. 13.
[92] Ibid., p.13.

feverish, ecstatic tone, he inserts a question: 'What effect has this splendour on those who pass beneath it?'[93] He deplores that so many people go through the gateway without paying any attention to the arch: 'Priest and layman, soldier and civilian, rich and poor, pass by it alike regardlessly. Up to the very recesses of the porches, the meanest tradesmen of the city push their counters'.[94] For Ruskin, a crowd often spoils the beauty of a place. In addition, he says

> The Venetian character is nearly destroyed, first by the frightful façade of San Moisè and then by the modernizing of the shops as they near the piazza, and the mingling with the lower Venetian populace of lounging groups of English and Austrians.[95]

To appreciate the architecture of St. Mark's, Ruskin tells himself as he

[93] Ruskin, 'The Stones of Venice', *The Works of John Ruskin Volume II*, ed. by E.T. Cook, (London: Gorge Allen, 1904), p.84.
[94] Ibid., p.84.
[95] Ibid., p.84.

enters, 'Forget them all'.[96] Ruskin suggests 'we may not enter the church out of the midst of the horror of this, let us turn aside under the portico'.[97] Ruskin may thus appear a Victorian 'cosmopolitan connoisseur'[98]who travels foreign countries and whose intellectual background allows him to appreciate 'high' art.

Ruskin's view of St. Mark's and a crowd contrast with Symons's perspective. In his 'Venice' essays written from 1894 to 1897, Symons emphasises the pleasure of viewing crowds and enjoys communicating with the locals during his travels. Around the entrance of St. Mark's, Symons also finds the same kinds of people described by James and Ruskin, but, for Symons, they seem to be 'the same bright crowd'[99] that welcomed him and pleased his eyes since he arrived in Venice. From the galleries of St. Mark's overlooking the Piazza, Symons describes the crowd in motion.

> Looking down from that height, you see the priests move

[96] Ibid., p.82.
[97] Ibid., p. 85.
[98] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 252.
[99] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: J. M. Dent & Co, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1903), p.71.

> through their appointed courses, the vestments, the incense mounting on the wings of the music, among the voices; and the great crowd crawling over the pavement, with a continual motion, from the church to the Piazza, from the Piazza to the church, settling down, now and again, into solid groups, like the pigeons outside. And indeed the aspect of the church is very similar to the aspect of the Piazza. It has the same air of space and leisure; it can be thronged, yet never appears to be full, and it has the same air of belonging to people. On a fiesta, everybody comes in, as naturally as everybody walks up and down the Piazza.[100]

Symons finds in the Piazza di San Marco a vast realized space of cosmopolitan hospitality that 'never appears to be full'[101] but welcomes everyone, regardless of their backgrounds or purposes. It is a He regards it as in 'one sense the "Rue de Rivoli" of Venice, the resort of every foreigner, is still, as it always

[100] Ibid., p.71.
[101] Ibid., p.72.

has been, the resort of the people, and of all the people'.[102] Symons describes a procession he sees there.

> A procession was slowly making its way along, a procession which seemed interminable; and, on coming nearer, I found that in effect it never ended, for the line returned upon itself like the winding line of farandole, […] The order was rarely broken, and the incredible slowness of the step was never quickened. It was the public promenade, in which only the costumes have changed, century after century; not the faces, nor the step, nor the drawling line returning upon itself, in which all Venice, shawled, bare-headed, bourgeois, aristocratic, and the carabinieri, imposing, ornamental creatures who seem for once in their place, in such a procession, take the air together.[103]

[102] Ibid., p.72.
[103] Ibid., pp.72-73.

Seeing ‘the public promenade’, Symons lets his imagination wander into the past. He sees the eternal cycle of humans that compose the long, multifaceted history of Venice, repeated century after century. Symons does not describe a historical image of the place as the extracted story of a chosen, representative figure such as a ruler; instead he describes the ‘public promenade’ as a reduced image of the city’s history because he knows each anonymous person is an equal and important component of the place.

Symons comfortably gazes at the space where various people gather. Finally, he describes St. Mark’s as having the tolerance to accept everyone who has human beauty. He finds St. Mark’s an ideal image of the harmonious splendour of a hybrid world, as if St. Mark’s has overcome every kind of human antagonism and stands as the pinnacle of humanism.

> It is half temple, half mosque; it has the severity of an early Christian church, overlaid by the barbaric splendours of the East; and its splendours, too, are hieratic, in a strange and fantastic hierarchy which seems to partake of all the religions,

the beginnings of Christianity seen visibly building themselves up out of the ruins of Paganism; and the rites of the Greek Church or of the Catholic would be equally in place. It is a church which is also the world, a little world into which everything enters; where everything that has human beauty, or curiosity, or value, is not too beautiful or valuable, and could in no way be unsuited, for the divine use. And St. Mark's has room, still, for all the world and all the churches. Tourists walk about carrying red guidebooks, and listening to the chatter of guides; old people, with handkerchiefs over their heads, twisted like turbans, kneel with clasped hands and unconscious eyes; the High Mass goes on in the choir, invisibly, behind the great barrier, through which there comes the sound of voices chanting; and, in a side chapel, an old priest says his Mass to a few devout persons. And nothing seems out of place, the devout persons, the priests, the tourists, the largest onyx in the world, over the pulpit, the profane

> sumptuousness of African marble, the 'majestical roof fretted with golden fire'; for here, as everywhere in Venice, all contradictions seem able to exist side by side, in some fantastic, not quite explicable, unity of their own.[104]

Among the factors that establish identity, religion is a delicate subject. It can provide strong support in one's life, but can also cause persistent conflicts among people and nations. However, in the above description of St. Mark's, Symons announces that different religions do not exist to negate each other. Religions might seem to have irreconcilable differences if one focuses on the history of conflicts.

Symons does not attempt to persuade in a loud voice but projects his view of the superb beauty he finds in the 'half temple, half mosque' of St. Mark's. For him, it is 'also the world, a little world into which everything enters'.[105] Symons speculates about the past, including the emergence of various religions, as part of the history of exquisitely diverse humanity. He wishes to believe in humanity; this

[104] Ibid., pp.70-71.
[105] Ibid., p.70.

belief forms one of the foundations of cosmopolitanism.

If this belief were shared by everyone, as Derrida suggests, there would be no need to prepare 'cosmopolitan law' or to set a new rule of 'unconditional hospitality' to prohibit questioning others' backgrounds. Symons and Derrida might share a concept of cosmopolitan hospitality; however, among the proponents of cosmopolitanism, Symons's Victorian view is closer to that of Homi K. Bhabha. Bhabha welcomes multicultural cosmopolitanism, while Derrida promotes a monotonous unification of the world without questioning the local identity of each person.

In Praise of Hybridity: Symons and Bhabha

Symons's favourable view of hybrid space for coexistence is a notable feature in 'Venice'. This differentiates it from works by his contemporaries about the city. Symons's idea of 'cosmopolitan' is therefore much closer to the 21st century discussion of the term. Symons welcomes hybridity in harmonious unification in

which people remain as they are, retaining their characteristics and identities.

Homi K. Bhabha is a leading scholar in the pursuit of hybrid cosmopolitanism. While their writings are in different genres—politics and literature—Bhabha and Symons have similar perspectives of cosmopolitanism. Symons emphasises human diversity or 'hybridity' when appreciating a place, and Bhabha works to develop the concept of hybridity to realize an ideal acceptance of globalization. Bhabha asserts that his 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' [106] encourages people to coexist without relinquishing their identities.

Like Said, Bhabha is a post-colonialist scholar. However, Bhabha does not share Said's focus on the dichotomy of the colonizer and the colonized. As an immigrant and a scholar of multicultural experiences, Bhabha is aware of his own migration experience, stating 'I have lived that moment of scattering of the people that in other times and other places, in the nations of others, becomes a time of gathering'.[107] Bhabha's major concern is shedding equal light on the narratives of

[106] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Unsatisfied: Notes on Vernacular Cosmopolitanism', *Postcolonial Discourses: An Anthology*, ed. by Gregory Castle (Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2011), p.43.
[107] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Dissemination: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation', *Nation and Narration*, ed. by Homi. K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), p.291.

marginalized people and the relationships between the colonizers and the colonized. Bhabha's studies are not restricted to rereading the colonial past; he seeks the creation of a hybrid space for an ideal multiculturalism by sharing a broad range of discourses with various people. Therefore, he pays significant attention to the role of translation rather than focusing on the double-edged discourse of a single perspective.

Different in almost all other ways, Bhabha and Symons are alike in emphasising the diversity of cultural backgrounds in a harmoniously united world where people accept their differences. They do not seek a monotonous unification of the world in which the characteristics of individuals are lost. In the end of his 'Dissemination', Bhabha admits his argument is based on 'the narrative graftings' of other scholars such as Kristeva and Fanon,[108] who also tackle the same concerns regarding the possibilities of cosmopolitanism in the age of globalization. He admits he attempted no general theory, but only a certain productive tension of the perplexity of language in various locations of living. Thus, instead of

[108] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Dissemination: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation', *Nation and Narration*, ed. by Homi. K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990), p.320.

inventing new theory to be put into practice, Bhabha chooses to conclude the essay by citing Walter Benjamin, who perhaps best represents what Bhabha wishes for the ideal cosmopolitanism.

> For it is by living on the borderline of history and language, on the limits of race and gender, that we are in a position to translate the differences between them into a kind of solidarity. I want to end with a much translated fragment from Walter Benjamin's essay, *The Task of the Translator*. I hope it will now be read from the nation's edge, through the sense of the city, from the periphery of the people, in culture's transnational dissemination: Fragments of a vessel in order to be articulated together must follow one another in the smallest details although they need not be *like* one another. In the same way a translation, instead of making itself similar to the meaning of the original, it must lovingly and in detail, form itself according to the manner of meaning of the original, to

> make them *both* recognizable as the broken fragments of the greater language, just as fragments are the broken parts of a vessel.[109]

The image presented here of the world as a vessel with fragmented pieces—Bhabha's ideal form of globalization—resembles Symons's description of St. Mark's in Venice as 'a little world into which everything enters; where everything that has human beauty, or curiosity, or value, is not too beautiful or valuable'. For Symons, 'Venice' is also an attractive city as 'patchwork'[110] or 'mosaic' [111] where the East and the West coexist. Both Symons and Bhabha share the ideal image of a cosmopolitan hybrid space open to everyone, regardless of cultural background or identity, based on the reciprocal understanding of the differences in each other, not asking or forcing one to assimilate into the other. Just as tiny pieces with different shapes compose a whole mosaic or patchwork in

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[109] Homi K. Bhabha, 'Dissemination: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation', *Nation and Narration*, ed. by Homi. K. Bhabha (New York: Routledge, 1990),p.320.
[110] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: J.M. Dent, & Co., New York: E. P. Dutton, 1903) p.68.
[111] Ibid., p.69.

harmonious unity, in Bhabha's and Symons's harmonious multicultural cosmopolitanism, people respect one another's differences and peacefully coexist. This would probably not require creating a 'cosmopolitan law', nor rely on monotonous unification or unbalanced relationships based on ideas of superiority and inferiority among individuals.

The two also share the perspective of people positioned between borders who are not categorized as local or cosmopolitan, native or foreigner, colonizer or colonized. With a strong consciousness of his own rootless origin, Symons is also conscious of those who find it necessary to wander from border to border without having a solid home identity, such as Gypsies or street vagabonds. He carefully describes such people as attractive and important components of the charm of a place, just like the foreign travellers and locals. This shows his aesthetic to sketch the hybrid beauty of the place as catches his eye. With his own migrant background, Bhabha is also strongly aware of people who live between or on the peripheries of solid national identities; the theme of shedding light on the narratives of marginalized people is his major concern.

It seems the two also share the humble but speculative attitude that led

them to suggest possibilities with which to approach their ideal views of a better world. While they already have much clearer vision of the ideal cosmopolitanism in which people coexist and respect on another's identities, it seems they do not try to deliver direct, forceful speech to persuade readers. They carefully avoid their texts becoming agitation for specific, immediate actions towards the achieving that world. Neither preaches with ideological claims; rather, they exhibit the visual image of such a world as a 'mosaic' so both the authors and readers can to speculate together about the favourable possibilities of harmonious multiculturalism.

This attitude exemplifies the unshakable respect for unknown others that Bhabha and Symons share. Without attempting to persuade readers to adopt a fixed concept, they choose to invite them to consider alternative possibilities for a better, harmonious multicultural world where 'all contradictions seem able to exist side by side, in some fantastic, not quite explicable, unity of their own'.[112]

[112] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: J. M. Dent & Co, New York: E. P. Dutton, 1903), p.71.

Despite the significant commonalities between Bhabha and Symons, a sense of strangeness might still occur when one compares Bhabha's views directly to those of the Victorian writer, Symons. This strangeness does not simply arise from the difference of their fields. It also stems from the fact that Symons does not use the term 'cosmopolitanism' or 'cosmopolitan' in his works.

He was one of the most trend-conscious critics in the 1890s, when 'cosmopolitan' was a fashionable adjective to embellish the intelligent person familiar with foreign things. Symons must have known how the term 'cosmopolitan' was accepted in the art and literary scenes. As the critic and translator who introduced the budding literary movement in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* and as one who was always quick to catch the latest trend, it seems impossible Symons was genuinely ignorant about the term.

His avoidance of the direct use of the term 'cosmopolitan' indicates it is an intentional decision, as if he insists that being a cosmopolitan is not special enough to warrant open profession. Without directly advertising the term, he fully

reveals his view as a cosmopolitan in his works, which suggests Symons's cosmopolitanism takes a kind of aesthetic stance.

Symons's attempts therefore to persuade only by projecting his view of a place, describing the exquisite beauty he finds in his travels. He praises the 'half temple, half mosque' of St. Mark's, which is 'also the world, a little world into which everything enters'.[113] He speculates about the past behind the building, including the emergence of religions as part the multifaceted history of exquisite diversities created by humans. This reflects his wish to believe in humanity as a universal virtue, a fundamental concept among the variants of cosmopolitanism. He sees no need to prepare a 'cosmopolitan law' or to set a new rule of 'unconditional hospitality' to prohibit questioning others' backgrounds. For this reason, Derrida's suggestion of 'unconditional hospitality' might have seemed meaningless to Symons. Instead, Symons shares ideals with Bhabha, who seeks multicultural cosmopolitanism rather than a monotonous unification of the world that ignores local identities.

However, as far as Symons's cosmopolitan view is exhibited in his 'travel

[113] Ibid., p.70.

essays', rather than as dissertations or opinion papers, the impact of his cosmopolitanism is inevitably weaker than that of Bhabha. The absence of a direct ideological assertion for the purpose of ideal globalization through applicable cosmopolitanism raises questions about how Symons's cosmopolitanism fits among the variants of cosmopolitanism.

Many of Symons's works create an impression of casual lightness, including his travel essay 'Venice' discussed in this chapter. 'Venice' differs from writings of interdisciplinary studies with purposeful claims. As is often the case with Symons's work, his publication style also enhances this impression.

The essay was written between 1894 and 1897 and was originally published as an article for the magazine *Saturday Review* (9 November 1901) under the title 'The Soul of Venice', not in a book form. When it was later included as 'Venice' in *Cities of Italy* (1907), Symons wrote in the preface that these essays might seem more 'organized' in a book form,[114] which suggests Symons was conscious of some antagonistic reception to his writing and himself, a prolific writer restlessly producing shorter, scrappy articles to survive the age of

[114] Symons, 'Preface', *Cities of Italy* (London: JM Dent and Co., New York: EP Dutton, 1907), p.2.

new journalism.[115]

Throughout his career, Symons emphasised immediacy so he could share his impressions with readers; therefore, he published shorter articles on various topics that attracted him, including the essays that recorded his impressions during his travels. He did not intend to publish a book of travel essays when he started to write these essays in the early 1890s, which creates the impression that the book collections of travel essays lack consistency.

By contrast, Ruskin published his *Stones of Venice* as a treatise with the solid purpose of exploring the history of the city and its landmark architecture with a passionate, moralistic intension to enlighten readers. Similarly, Oliphant intended her *The Makers of Venice* to be the first of a series of handsomely bound, copiously illustrated 'coffee-table' publications. She avoided periodicals, instead following a careful plan to make the book 'readable and amusing as well as accurate and valuable'[116] 'In these 'coffee-table' books 'she found a way of venturing to comment upon the prevailing Victorian ideologies in her own voice,

[115] In the 1890s, Symons was such a prolific contributor for periodicals that Oscar Wilde somewhat ironically dubbed him 'Symons Ltd.'. Vincent O'Sullivan, *Aspects of Wilde* (London: Constable, 1936), p.77.
[116] Elizabeth Jay, *Mrs. Oliphant: A Fiction to Herself: A Literary Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.255.

rather than resorting to the male mouthpiece of her periodical articles'.[117] Like those of Symons, most of the essays included in James' *Italian Hours* also originally appeared in periodicals, but they provide a more consistent, uniform impression. For instance, James focuses on the changes of the cities of Italy in chronological order so the reader can follow the historical transition to the unification of Italy through the author's eye.

As a self-identified traveller and wanderer, Symons's passages exhibit exquisite casualness in his 'Venice', as if the readers were travelling with him without any personal plan of where to go. Symons describes his travel without a guidebook, including unexpected incidents such as the moment he got lost. He enjoyed such accidental circumstances.

Arriving in Venice for the first time, he is excited to see new wonders. 'I would find my way to St. Mark's on foot, through the labyrinth of streets and bridges, in which I did not even know whether to turn to the right or to the left', and 'it seemed to me amusing to trust myself to the attraction of the centre, and I

[117] Ibid., p. 255.

set out confidently, following as far as I could the main stream of people'.[118] Consequently, Symons becomes lost in the snake-like winding roads that lead to St. Mark's in the approaching darkness of night. After some predictable struggles, when he finally reaches St. Mark's, he is delighted and exhausted: 'I was glad to see Venice for the first time by night, and to come into it in just this casual fashion'.[119]

Symons regards a place as if it were a person. He states, 'A place has almost the shyness of a person, with strangers; and its secret is not to be surprised by a too direct interrogation'.[120] In the dedication to his first anthology of travel essays, *Cities* (1903), Symons writes, 'Cities are like people, with souls and temperaments of their own, and it has always been one of my chief pleasures to associate with the souls and temperaments congenial to me among cities'.[99] To obtain such pleasure in travelling, he regards a guidebook as 'a necessary evil' that could reveal the secrets of a city too directly. He is a curious traveller who always welcomes the freshness of the unexpected first impression of a place. His

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[118] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: JLM Dent, NY: EP Dutton, 1903), p.61.
[119] Ibid.,p.61.
[120] Symons, 'To Madame La Comtesse De La Tour', Cities (London: JM Dent, NY: EP Dutton, 1903), p.v.

essay is thus filled with the sudden excitement of random findings and thrills as a result of his snapshot technique that shows spectacles as they unfold before his eyes.

To grasp the cosmopolitan focus on these features, John Urry's definition of 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' introduced in *Consuming Places* (1995) helps by placing Symonsian cosmopolitanism in a clearer taxonomy of the variants of cosmopolitanism available today. As Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen summarize, Urry's notion of 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' is linked with the tendency to believe that the growth in the number and reach of global connoisseurs, elite or not, was a sign of growing cosmopolitanism. Not restricted to elites, tourists of all kinds have developed more cosmopolitan or far-reaching aesthetic tastes, which can be directly linked with (as both the driving force and outcome of) the enhanced popular trend over the past few decades towards the 'consumption' of foreign places.[121] Cosmopolitan tourism contributes to this trend, which includes 'the search for varied experiences, a delight in

[121] Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, 'Introduction', *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.7.

understanding the contrasts between societies rather than a longing for uniformity or superiority, and the development of some skills at interpreting cultural meanings'.[122]

Symons travels as a cosmopolitan tourist who willingly enjoys following locals ways in a foreign country, even if he finds them inconvenient. He practices the adage, 'when in Rome do as Romans do'. This cosmopolitanism involves an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent experiences from different cultures.

Before Urry states the essential requirements for aesthetic cosmopolitanism, he cites Hannerz for support.

> There is the generation of cosmopolitanism amongst at least some travelers. Living in the modern world is taken to a new level with cosmopolitanism, with a willingness of people to open out to others who live elsewhere. Cosmopolitanism involves an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness

[122] Ibid., p.7.

> towards divergent experiences from *different* national cultures. There is a search for and delight in contrasts between societies rather than a longing for uniformity or superiority. [123]

The description is specific; he is a frequent traveller and a man of letters, in a sense, 'cosmopolitan connoisseur'[124] who finds pleasure in new experiences and random encounters in foreign lands. Urry developed this type of cosmopolitanism further in the context of the boom in tourism that grew quickly after the dawn of the nineteenth century. He outlined six factors in aesthetic cosmopolitanism: (1) extensive patterns of real and simulated mobility in which it is thought that one has the *right* to travel anywhere and consume, at least initially, all environments; (2) a *curiosity* about all places, peoples and cultures and at least a rudimentary ability to map such places and cultures historically, geographically and anthropologically; (3) an *openness* to other peoples and cultures and a willingness/ability to appreciate some elements of the language/culture of the

[123] Ulf Hannerz, 'Cosmopolitans and locals in world culture', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 7 (1990), pp. 237-252.
[124] Ulf Hannerz, *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992),p.252.

place that one is visiting; (4) a willingness to take *risks* by virtue of moving outside the tourist environmental bubble; (5) an ability to *locate* one's own society and its culture in terms of a wide-ranging historical and geographical knowledge, to have some ability to reflect upon and judge aesthetically between different natures, places and societies; and (6) a certain *semiotic* skill to be able to interpret tourist signs, to see what they are meant to represent, and indeed to know when they are partly ironic and to be approached in a detached fashion.

Urry observes in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a similar kind of aesthetic cosmopolitanism that developed amongst the British upper class, who were able to expand their repertoire of landscapes for visual consumption. Urry admits his argument of aesthetic cosmopolitanism concerns the issues of social identity and of local, regional, national and European identities. He pays special attention to the development of tourism to discuss the formation and reproduction of such identities. His argument frequently focuses on 'mobility' in modern cities because he regards it as an important keyword to characterise aesthetic cosmopolitanism. This is closely connected to the rise in the new style of tourism, rambling or *flânerie*, which flourished in the nineteenth century.

Each factor of Urry's table of aesthetic cosmopolitanism applies to Symons. First, Symons admits in 'A Prelude to Life'[125] that he fully utilized 'the right to travel' as a Victorian traveller, thanks to the extensively developed transportation network of the age, just as he was able to enjoy travelling in his mind by reading *Lavengro* or *Don Quixote* as a child. Second, through reading, Symons nurtured his curiosity about foreign lands and was able to map them historically, geographically and anthropologically without losing his curiosity about unknown foreign lands as an adult. Third, Symons always maintained his openness towards other people and cultures, and his multilingual ability helped him to communicate with locals in the places he visited; the episodes of his stay in Venice show how he willingly joined the gondoliers playing *bocce* and sat with them in the local tavern parlour where he 'always felt myself to be in the company of gentlemen'.[126] Fourth, as he preferred visiting unknown places including less popular spots 'like a fishing village'[127] during his journeys, Symons was filled with adventurous curiosity and willingly took risks by moving outside the

[125] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), pp. 17-21.
[126] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: JM Dent, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1903), p.85.
[127] Ibid., pp.76-77.

designated areas for tourists and by not relying on guidebooks or maps. Fifth, Symons observed the contrasts between places and societies, which he vividly describes in his 'Venice'. Sixth, he noticed that 'The Englishman or German, though he takes his ice at Florian's, or his coffee at the Quadri, like a native, is, after all, only an outside spectator of the really Venetian way of taking one's leisure',[128] Symons interpreted tourist signs to see what they were meant to represent and to learn when they were partly ironic and should be approached in a detached fashion.

Urry analyses how aesthetic cosmopolitanism germinated during the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries in Europe and developed into international tourism based on the advancements in peoples' mobility. Urry explains tourism not only in terms of the development of transportation, but also in terms of the simulated travelling experience found in resources like books, films or television. The variety of trans-border experiences has contributed to the organization of the modern tourism industry, which accelerated the restructuring of cosmopolitanism into the consumer-driven culture of tourism. Unlike cosmopolitanism as a

[128] Ibid., p.72.

normative and cognitive emancipation, aesthetic cosmopolitanism 'presupposes extensive patterns of mobility, a stance of openness to others, a willingness to take risks and an ability to reflect upon and judge aesthetically between different natures, places and societies, both now and in the past'.[129] Therefore, the main role of the 'expert' of aesthetic cosmopolitanism is 'to interpret' the differences in places and not classify them as superior or inferior.

The 'interpreter's' role here seems to be what Symons pursued as his passion during his career. He is not aiming to be a 'preacher' or a 'legislative activist' to change the world. Due to his insatiable curiosity and openness to all things foreign, and thanks to the mobility of the print market of his age, Symons is able to experience and then convey what he saw in his short articles in periodicals, which were widely read. Symons's cosmopolitanism shares Bhabha's view of ideal multiculturalism, although Symons does not aim to announce his view as a kind of slogan to directly and immediately change one's worldview. Thus, in his essays, Symons takes the stance of a curious spectator.

Unlike Bhabha and other post-colonialists, Symons's text lacks the direct

[129] John Urry, *Consuming Places* (London and New York: Routledge 1995), p. 145.

enthusiasm that aspires for change or a purposeful effort; his view is derived from the vantage point of aesthetic cosmopolitanism and not from a pressing need of his own. Therefore, some may conclude that his aesthetic cosmopolitanism is too humble in persuasion and powerless to change readers' minds. However, as Terry Eagleton points out in *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), the texts written from aesthetic points of view can revise social relations.

'Aesthetic' is subjectively selectable by one's own will; therefore, it can be used as political propaganda, for it is able to influence others freely and unguardedly due to its 'double-edged' concept. [130] The aesthetic is, according to Eagleton,

> From the beginning a contradictory, double-edged concept. On the one hand, it figures as a genuinely emancipatory force—as a community of subjects now linked by sensuous impulse and fellow-feeling rather than by heteronomous law, each safeguarded in its unique particularity while bound at the

[130] Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p.28.

> same time into social harmony. The aesthetic offers the middle class a superbly versatile model of their political aspirations, exemplifying new forms of autonomy and self-determination, transforming the relations between law and desire, morality and knowledge, recasting the links between individual and totality, and revising social relations on the basis of custom, affection and sympathy.[131]

The aesthetic as 'free consent'[132] may be the antithesis of oppressive power such as law; therefore, it could effectively permeate its participants. As Eagleton repeats the 'contradictory, double-edged concept' of an aesthetic, enumerating the concept's possible use, he is emphasizing that 'the aesthetic as custom, sentiment, spontaneous impulse' may consort well enough with 'political domination'.[133] The aesthetic is in one sense risky, for it can slip into one's mind and be an effective tool for political domination, able to 'operate as a supremely

[131] Ibid., p.28.
[132] Ibid., p.27.
[133] Ibid., p.28.

effective mode of political hegemony'.[134]

In taking this permeating aspect of 'aesthetic' into account, Symons's travel essays, which represent his 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism', would also be able to slip into readers' hearts effectively, not only leaving beautiful images of foreign lands in their minds, but also arousing sympathy among readers who may have been originally indifferent about the concept of cosmopolitanism. By portraying the images of multiculturalism in harmonious unity, a travel essay may inspire readers to seek change. It is not an external force, such as 'a cosmopolitan law' that directly asks people to obey. Aesthetic cosmopolitanism may be 'humble' in its impact, but is certain to elicit some response from readers.

As a frequent traveller who was conscious of his own rootlessness, Symons practiced the Diogenesian cosmopolitan right to travel, developing it as the aesthetic of nomadism and regarding it an ideal lifestyle for an artist. While he clearly exhibited his awareness of the fictive nature of Orientalism as a Western creation, he was still able to utilize it as a source for his art. He was attracted to places with history and to the interaction between East and West for new

[134] Ibid., p.28.

inspiration and spectacles.

Symons's travel essays reveal his aesthetic cosmopolitanism, evident to readers in a casual manner through publication in periodicals. This medium guaranteed that many different types of people could read them, including busy people who seldom had the time to read the large volumes of a monograph. As an example of the keen awareness of Victorian writers representing the Orient, Symons's cosmopolitan view, as admitted in his travel essay, 'Venice', is still applicable to the discussion of 21st century cosmopolitanism and suggests possibilities for aesthetic cosmopolitanism.

In Chapter 2, the theme of 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' in Symons is further discussed. The chapter focuses on his role as a *flâneur* poet in London who devoted his pen to sketching the mobility of the modern city where the hybrid beauty of the anonymous crowd exists.

Chapter 2

A Flâneur Poet in London

This chapter considers Symons's representation of London from his poems of the 1890s to *London: A Book of Aspects* (1908), focusing on his aesthetic as a flâneur poet in order to explore how his cosmopolitanism is reflected in his description of the metropolitan cityscape. As opposed to the quiet reception of his travel essays and short fictions, *London Nights* (1895) attracted a lot of attention immediately after its publication, establishing his reputation as a decadent poet. *London Nights* surely made him one of the central figures of the literary circle in Victorian *fin-de-siècle* London; However, such an intense public response was not overwhelmingly favourable. Some reviews condemned not only his poems but also Symons himself, labelling him an immoral person, judging him for his choice of subjects for his poems and failing to see his artistic method. This circumstance finally motivated Symons to write a preface to the second edition of *London*

Nights in 1897, not only in his own defence but also to clarify his artistic aim in poetry, which contributes to his reputation as 'an impressionistic poet'.

London was a special place for Symons. Though he frequently travelled overseas, he always lived in London during his active years. After the diagnosis of his mental breakdown in 1908, he gradually receded from prominence in literary London and finally moved to Island Cottage in Kent. Therefore, the peak of his career could be called his 'London period'. The series of writings on London reflects his shifting views towards this city, beginning with his young passion for settling in London, as evidenced in *Spiritual Adventures*. He does not hide his fresh pleasure in prowling the city in the poems of the 1890s, and finally he writes reminiscences of the 'once habitable London'[135] and expresses anxiety about the inevitable changes brought by the industrialisation of the city in *London: A Book of Aspects*.

As observed in Chapter 1, Symons was a self-identified wanderer who preferred frequent travelling overseas without a solid purpose and genuinely sought new spectacles. He professes that the nomadic life is the best lifestyle for

[135] Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks, 1908), p. 13.

an artist, and this inclination towards wandering is also apparent in his London life.[136] He was never the type of writer to seclude himself in his study all day long; instead, he loved strolling around the city after the gaslights were lit for the pleasure of finding new excitements and new spectacles for his eyes, to capture the various aspects of London with his pen. With regard to this passion, the name Charles Baudelaire is often remembered first, since Symons does not hide his respect for this French poet as a practitioner of the aesthetic of flânerie. Due to the established reputation of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, the influences of foreign literature (especially French) tend to be mentioned in discussions of Symons's literary achievement, but in analysing Symons's background as a flâneur poet, the influences of Walter Pater and Charles Lamb should also be noted, as both are crucial literary mentors who influenced Symons in his descriptions of the multifaceted aspects of London.

Under both international and domestic literary influences, Symons was attracted to the aesthetic of flânerie. To express his experiences in poetry, he

[136]Beerbohm, Max, 'First Meetings with W. B. Yeats', *Mainly On the Air* (New York: Knopf, 1958), p. 109.

employs a style he later called 'impressionistic writing'.[137] 'Impressionistic' has been one of the adjectives most frequently used to describe Symons's writings, both by his contemporaries such as T.S. Eliot and W. B. Yeats and by the latest studies of Symons's works. As an art critic, Symons repeatedly writes on impressionist artist J. M. Whistler, which reveals Symons's strong interest in the possibility of impressionism in painting; but how Symons understood impressionism as a poet and developed his own literary impressionism should be clarified. This process is essential to clarify the method Symons sought in his literature.

Helped by a rapid, impressionistic sketching style, Symons's poems vividly visualise the moments that attracted his eyes. These short but colourful pieces allow readers to view and experience flânerie in *fin-de-siècle* London. However, while these pieces that vividly represent snapshots of urban experiences have an impressive visual effect, one might ask whether they can deliver a powerful message about the poet, his ideology, or his world view. Does impressionistic writing remain exclusively as an aesthetic evaluation? Susan Sontag and John

[137]Symons, 'Impressionistic Writing', *Dramatis Personae* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs- Merrill Company, 1923), p. 343.

Urry provide clues to this puzzle, for they found an affinity between amateur photographers who travelled around cities looking for the best spots for their photos in the 20th century and flâneur poets in the 19th century. As Sontag observes in *On Photography* (1979), photography 'seems' to be the means of transcribing reality, but in fact 'photographs are the outcome of an active signifying practice'.[138] Just as the image taken by a photographer is not a miniature slice of reality because it inevitably reflects the photographer's subjective choices and decisions about when to pop the shutter of the camera, a poem written by a flâneur poet also reflects the subjective choices and decisions about how the poet sees the cityscape in front of him, carefully choosing which moment is to be cut out from among the myriad random impressions gathered during city prowling. Symons is able to view London from a bird's-eye view as well as to focus on each individual in the crowd. He is a flâneur poet attracted to London as a cosmopolitan city; therefore, he represents London as a hybrid space where people with various backgrounds incessantly pass each other while remaining anonymous. Symons carefully cuts out the moment that captured his

[138]Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 109.

eye and even exhibits eternal patterns of humanity he finds in every corner of the city. As Stange points out, Symons is able to write about London with 'something like Baudelaire's mythographic sense, to make the city a convincing milieu of spiritual adventures'.[139] However, there is still a certain difference between Symons and Baudelaire. Karl Beckson points out that 'critics searching for the influence of Baudelaire on Symons have not perceived a major distinction between the two poets'.[140] Symons is able not only to 'give the scattered facts of the city a metaphoric significance'[141] but also to suggest the possibility of aesthetic cosmopolitanism through his gaze; he is a poet who finds and praises the urban hybridity that enlivens the cityscape of London filled with an affluence of diverse lives, instead of ostensibly exhibiting one aspect of the city experience. As a task of the flâneur poet, Symons devotes his artistic effort to exhibiting various aspects of the urban city for readers with living reality so they can virtually experience every moment the poet finds attractive as if they were walking through

[139] G. Robert Stange, 'The Frightened Poets', in *The Victorian City: Images and Realities Vol. 2*. ed. by H. J.Dyos and M. Wolff (London: Routledge, 1973), p. 491.
[140] Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 118.
[141] Ibid., p. 491.

a kaleidoscopic view of the city. When a reader gazes favourably at the cityscape and can enjoy the virtual sojourn, that is surely the moment when Symons and readers share the cosmopolitan perspective to praise the hybrid beauty of London, as if 'all contradictions seem able to exist side by side, in some fantastic, not quite explicable, unity of their own'.[142] The possibility of aesthetic cosmopolitanism can surely be found in Symons's flâneur literature that invites us to see the cityscape differently, as a reduced image of the diversity of human lives.

The Background of 'The Religion of the Eyes': Pater, Lamb, and 'Impressionistic Writing'

Among literary figures who contributed to Symons's development of his aesthetic, the most influential mentor must be Pater. Pater significantly influenced the writers of the 1890s even though he died in 1894. His influence is extensive and diverse upon many of the younger generation, from Joseph Conrad to D. H.

[142] Symons, 'Venice', *Cities* (London: J.M. Dent & Co, 1903), p. 71.

Lawrence and T. S. Eliot, but most notably the members of the Rhymers' Club, including Symons, Ernest Dowson, Lionel Johnson, Herbert Horne, and Yeats.[143] However, it is also true that some of them, like Eliot, gradually dismissed Pater's influence on their writing.[144] Among Symons's contemporaries, Wilde is the one who contributes most to strengthening the impression of decadence in Pater. Yeats remembers his first meeting with Wilde, who called Pater's *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* 'the very flower of decadence', professing 'it's my golden book; I never travel anywhere without it'.[145] However, as Richard Ellmann observes, Wilde is 'at once admiring Pater and making him faintly ridiculous'.[146] Symons writes that what he likes in Wilde is 'his wit' and 'his instinct for receiving other people's opinions'; but it seems that Wilde never releases an acquired idea without reproducing it with his own embellishment.[147] Symons analyses this Wildean trait thus: 'What he touches is his own image of

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[143] Gerald Monsman, 'Pater and His Younger Contemporaries', *Victorian Newsletter*, 48 (1975), p. 3.
[144] Ibid., p. 1.
[145] W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies: The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats Volume III*, ed. by William H. O'Donnell and Douglas N. Archibald (New York: Scribner, 1999), p. 124.
[146] Richard Ellmann, *Oscar Wilde* (London: Penguin Books, 1987), p. 284.
[147] Symons, 'Frank Harris and Oscar Wilde', *The Memoir of Arthur Symons*, ed. by Karl Beckson (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1977), p. 136.

what he sees, and he begins at once to adorn the image that he has made, to hide its true lineaments away under new veils of his own weaving'.[148]

Like Wilde, Symons had a kind of antenna receptive to new ideas and opinions. But unlike Wilde, who willingly embellished an idea he had received from another with dramatic effects, Symons was not interested in reprocessing the philosophy of his respectable predecessor Pater when turning to his own words. As Laurel Brake points out, one way to examine Pater's presence is through the treatment he received at the hands of his 'protégé', Symons; even after Oscar Wilde's trials, Symons attempted to heroise Pater and sanitise his reputation by separating Pater from the discussion of decadence, continuing to praise him in the last issue of *The Savoy*.[149] Brake also points out Symons's careful actions to decouple Pater and decadence by excluding Pater's name from the list of the advertisement of *The Decadent Movement in Literature* in 1896 and also from the article in 1912[150] that endorses Symons's unchanging sincerity in protecting his

[148] Symons, 'De Profundis', *A Study of Oscar Wilde* (London: Charles Sawyer, 1930), p. 81.
[149] Laurel Brake, 'Pater, Symons and the Culture of the *Fin de Siècle* in Britain', in *Walter Pater (1839-1894): Le forme della modernita/ The Forms of Modernity*, ed. Elisa Bizzotto and Franco Marucci (Milan: Cisalpino, 1996), p. 287.
[150] Brake, *Print in Transition, 1850-1910: Studies in Media and Book History* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 271-272.

literary mentor's dignity.

Not only did Pater's philosophy of art influence Symons, but Pater also played a direct and significant role in helping the young Symons embark on a new life and debut in London literary circles as a professional writer. Just before Symons's debut, in a letter dated 7 May 1885 to Charles Churchill Osborne, Symons writes, 'I attempted to model my style on that of Walter Pater (to whom I refer in a phrase you query as "the most exquisite critic of our day"—a phrase which I think fits him exactly)'.[151] When Symons wrote this, he was merely an avid reader and admirer of Pater's work; but soon thereafter, in December 1886, Symons received the first letter from Pater, stating that he had read *An Introduction to the Study of Robert Browning* (1886), Symons's first book, and inviting him to visit Pater at his residence in Kensington.[152] This circumstance must have been a fortunate auspice in the earliest phase of Symons's literary career; thereafter, their correspondence comprised lively discussions of poetry and

[151] Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 31. Osborne was working as a schoolmaster at Mr. Jeffery's School, which Symons attended. He discovered in Symons a passion for poetry and continued supporting Symons, sending books and magazines for more than nine years after he had quitted his job at the school.

[152] Walter Pater, *Letters of Walter Pater*, ed. by Lawrence Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 70.

art, which must have fostered the trustful relationship between them. Among the letters he received from Pater, Symons was especially proud of the longest one, dated 8 January 1888, and referred to it as 'the most interesting letter which I ever had from him, the only letter which went to six pages', discussing two poems in particular, 'A Revenge' and 'Bell in Camp'[153]:

> My Dear Mr. Symons,
>
> I feel much flattered at your choosing me as an arbiter in the matter of your literary work, and thank you for the pleasure I have had in reading carefully the two poems you have sent me. […] Well! Judging by these two pieces, I should say that you have a poetic talent, remarkable, especially at the present day, for precise and intellectual grasp on the matter it deals with. […] I should think you ought to find no difficulty in finding a publisher for poems such as those you have sent to me. I am more than ever anxious to meet you. Letters are such

[153] Ibid., p. 70. 'A Revenge' and 'Bell in Camp' are included in Symons's *Days and Nights* (1889).

> poor means of communication. Don't come to London without making an appointment to come and see me here.[154]

In light of such kind and encouraging comments given in such a humorous tone, Symons's delighted excitement is easily imaginable. In the background of his unchanged devoted attitude to Pater, one can recognise these fortunate communications that transcended generations.

Of course, it is obvious that Pater's works, besides his direct support and helpful advice, encouraged Symons to devote his passion to Paterian aesthetic. With regard to the germination of desire to be a flâneur poet strolling through the urban city for new spectacles and new excitements, Pater's aesthetic must have pushed Symons to devote himself to capturing every fleeting moment in front of him for his art, justifying every tiny experience itself as the artistic aim. They share the aesthetic of 'moment' and 'transparency': 'For art comes to you proposing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they

154 Walter Pater, *Letters of Walter Pater*, ed. by Lawrence Evans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 70.

pass, and simply for those moments' sake'[155]in Pater's 'Conclusion' of *The Renaissance* (1873) overlaps Symons's recollection of his enthusiasm upon his debut in London in 'A Prelude to Life' in *Spiritual Adventures*;

> If there ever was a religion of the eyes, I have devoutly practised that religion. I noted every face that passed me on the pavement; I looked into the omnibuses, the cabs, always with the same eager hope of seeing some beautiful or interesting person, some gracious movement, a delicate expression, which would be gone if I did not catch it as it went. This search without an aim grew to be almost a torture to me; my eyes ached with the effort, but I could not control them. At every moment, I knew, some spectacle awaited them; I grasped at all these sights with the same futile energy as a dog that I once saw standing in an Irish stream, and snapping at the bubbles that ran continually past him on the

[155] Walter Pater, 'Conclusion', *The Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 153.

water. Life ran past me continually, and I tried to make all its bubbles my own.[156]

Symons's naming of the 'religion of the eyes' proves his readiness for the aesthetic purpose of capturing the moments that were vanishing continually, even though such efforts would require 'futile energy'.[157] To fulfil this artistic aim, Pater's phrase, 'Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end',[158] must have been an encouraging credo for the young Symons as he searched for his direction as a poet with an insatiable desire for every new experience in London. In *A Study of Walter Pater* (1932), Symons proclaims his admiration, citing Pater's questions: 'How many we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest numbers of vital forces unite in their purest energy?' together with the answer that 'to burn always with this hard,

[156] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life,' *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Vol.5 - Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 32.
[157] Ibid., p. 32.
[158] Pater, 'Conclusion', *The Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 151-152.

gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life'.[159] It is as if Symons confirms how influential this phrase is for his literature; 'I have never forgotten such sentences'.[160] The 'gem-like flame' may be 'colourless' and of a 'clear crystal nature'[161]; this Paterian aesthetic of prioritising colourless transparency as a requirement for the artistic temperament overlaps Symons's persistence in protecting his 'eyes freed from many prejudices'[162] to see the world before him always with fresh excitement, justifying his rootless background, positively as if it is a privilege for a perfect artist. Symons interprets a crystal-like transparent receptivity as an essential trait for an artist, so that he could freely embark on new experiences in which new spectacles awaited. Symons's determination to maintain his always open view of the world in fact supports the religion of the eyes that he describes.

Another crucial figure who motivated Symons to write about the lively impression of the London cityscape was Charles Lamb. As Markert observes,

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[159] Ibid. p. 152.
[160] Symons, *A Study of Walter Pater* (London: Charles Sawyer, 1932), p. 31.
[161] Pater, 'Diaphneite', *The Renaissance: Studies in Art and Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 158.
[162] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 4.

Symons undoubtedly learned from Pater's essay to appreciate Lamb as an early elaborator of aestheticism and impressionism.[163] Lamb is perfectly suited to the role of Pater's aesthetic critic, for he prioritises the details of his own experience with 'boundless sympathy'[164] for art for its own sake. Symons continues the same line of thinking in his own appreciation of Lamb. Symons's frequent references from *London: A Book of Aspects* (1908) to literary criticisms in *A Study of Walter Pater* (1932) exhibit the fact that Symons respects Lamb, especially as a precursor of the city essay of London. Symons writes, 'In Lamb, London found its one poet', citing Lamb's letter to Wordsworth that reports the cityscape of London in 1801:

> The lighted shops of the Strand, and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades, tradesmen, and customers, coaches, wagons, playhouses, all the bustle and wickedness around about Covent Garden, the very women of the town, the watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles—life awake, if you awake,

[163] Lawrence W. Markert, *Arthur Symons: Critic of the Seven Arts* (Ann Arbor: *University of Michigan* Press, 1988), p. 16.
[164] Pater, 'Charles Lamb', *The Works of Walter Pater: Appreciations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 109.

> at all hours of the night, the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street, the crowds, the very dirt and mud, the sun shining on houses and pavements, the print shops, the old bookstalls, persons cheapening the books, coffee-houses, steams of smoke from kitchens, the pantomime, London itself a pantomime and a masquerade—all these things work themselves into my mind feed me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impels me into night-walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fullness of Joy at so much life.[165]

Symons's praise that 'There, surely, is the poem of London'[166] indicates his respect for the art of Lamb's detailed, lively sketching, which conveys the mood of the place. The reader can experience the moment like a virtual reality, seeing a vivid, living picture of the Strand in the 1800s. Symons must have willingly tried to inherit the role of 'the poet of London' with an artistic enthusiasm for

[165] Symons, *A Study of Walter Pater* (London: Charles Sawyer, 1932), p. 58.
[166] Ibid., p. 58.

describing the multifaceted charm of London in the 1890s. He professes in his recollection of the early days about starting his career that everything that caught his eyes would be gone if he did not catch it as it went.[167] This effort could be interpreted as Symons aiming to develop a method of describing all tiny details as they are. However, it does not seem that Symons would hold in positive regard a minute description of realism that records and outputs everything as it is in detail; for instance, in 'A Note on Zola's Method' (which first appeared in *Athenaeum*, 5 August 1893, as the unsigned review, 'Emile Zola, *Le Docteur Pascal* and *Doctor Pascal*, or, *Life and Heredity*, translation by Ernest A. Vizetelly'), Symons observes of Emile Zola that 'He cannot leave well alone; he cannot omit; he will not take the most obvious fact for granted'.[168] Compared with 'one little detail, which Flaubert selects from among a thousand', Symons sees that 'he [Zola] would never have given to us that!' For Symons, Zola's language 'in which all this is written, apart from the consideration of language as a medium, is really not

[167] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 32.
[168]Symons, 'A Note on Zola's Method', in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: EP Dutton, 1958) p. 157.

literature at all, in any strict sense'.[169] In 'The Price of Realism' (*Academy*, 63, August 2, 1902), Symons also criticises the 'inartistic endeavour to be real': 'This costly and inartistic aim at reality, then, is the vice of the modern stage, and, at its best or worst, can it be said that it is really even what it pretends to be; a perfectly deceptive imitation of the real thing?'[170] Obviously, Symons is enthusiastic about seeing/experiencing everything as much as possible as a source of his art, devoutly practising 'the religion of the eyes'. However, he also prioritises the process of selecting from among a thousand details. For Symons, impressionistic writing by artistic subjectivity absolutely surpasses the effort of minute, objective description of realism. Zola's aim to visualise the diversity of human lives in *Les Rougon-Macquart* (1871-1893), strenuously shedding lights on individuals in every class during the second French Empire (1852-1870), might be shared by Symons in terms of cosmopolitanism in literature. However, as Symons emphasises in the title of his essay 'A Note on Zola's Method', Symons cannot find artistic feature in the 'method' of Zola's realism, whose language is devoted exclusively to reporting the scene as objectively as possible. Therefore, while

[169] Ibid., p. 158.
[170] Symons, *Plays, Acting and Music* (London: Constable, 1909), pp. 164-165.

Symons passionately praises Huysmans's minute description that weaves and mixes everything in front of the narrator up with Huysmans's own subjective imagery, Symons cannot favourably accept Zola's description as art.

Artistic subjectivity must be the factor Symons prioritises in his literature. Symons explains the method he aims at in 'Impressionistic Writing':

> The first thing is to see, and with an eye which sees all, and as if one's only business were to see; and then to write, from a selecting memory, and as if one's only business were to write. It is the interesting heresy of a particular kind of art to seek truth before beauty; but in an impressionistic art concerned, as the art of painting is, with the revelation, the re-creation, of a coloured and harmonious world, which (they tell us) owes its very existence to the eyes which see it, truth is a quality which can be attained only by him who seeks beauty before truth.[171]

[171]Symons, 'Impressionistic Writing', *Dramatis Personae* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1923), p. 343.

As seen in the title 'An Impressionistic Poet' of the unsigned review of *The Academy*[172] for the anthology of Symons's poems published in 1901, as well as in T. S. Eliot's evaluation that Symons 'is a representative of what is called "aesthetic criticism" or "impressionistic criticism"'[173], 'impressionistic' has been one of the most frequently used words to describe Symons's writings, and it seems Symons is quite aware of such receptions, as he voluntarily explains the aim of impressionistic writing in his own words. The interesting characteristic of the essay 'Impressionistic Writing' is that Symons argues for 'impressionistic art' in paintings and literature equally in the same context, without treating these two genres separately. With regard to this kind of confusion that Symons reveals, Max Saunders points out that 'Impressionism has always been a problematic term, contested within both Art History and Literature'.[174] In *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (2001), Jesse Matz also examines literary impressionism, reviewing the genealogy of this term, both in paintings and

[172]Unsigned review for *Poems by Arthur Symons* (London: Heinemann, 1901), p. 6, 'An Impressionistic Poet', *The Academy* (28 December 1901), p. 627.
[173] T. S. Eliot, 'The Perfect Critic', *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, ed. by Frank Kermode (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 51.
[174] Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 261.

literature, with careful examinations of the uses of the word 'impression' by modernist writers such as Virginia Woolf or Joseph Conrad, and indicates the incoherence of 'literary impressionism', which has 'enjoyed only uneasy legitimacy' as a name for late nineteenth and early twentieth century subjective writing.[175] However, it is also true that the term 'impression' is 'key to a series of pivotal statements of literary doctrine', and 'it makes its first relevant appearance in Walter Pater's "Preface" to *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (1873), which made an effort to know "one's impression as it really is" the key to aesthetic criticism'.[176] Symons is in fact the one who joined this genealogy of literary impressionism as a student of Pater.

As if he accepted the ambiguous state of the use of the term 'impressionism', Symons often treats both literature and visual art at the same time to discuss the concept. As Catherine Maxwell observes, 'when considering the relationship between painterly and literary varieties of impressionism in the later nineteenth century, the visual artist who seems most pertinent to writing in English is not a

[175] Jesse Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 12.
[176] Ibid., p. 13.

French impressionist but the American painter James Abbott McNeil Whistler (1834-1903)'.[177] Symons is the one who repeatedly argues this cosmopolitan impressionist Whistler in discussing the concept of 'impression' and 'impressionist', juxtaposing both painters and poets. Symons published a series of essays on Whistler[178] and always discusses French poets such as Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarmé, or Baudelaire together in the same articles for comparison, to exhibit the importance of 'selection', 'omission', and 'elimination' done by the artist's subjective decision to accomplish the work. In Whistler, Symons finds 'a choice of subject, a way of painting, which had no relation with those devout details of the older schools',[179] praising 'the taste raised to genius in Whistler that he almost invariably knew when to stop'.[180] According to Symons, Verlaine has done the equivalent thing in poetry:

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[177] Catherine Maxwell, 'Whistlerian Impressionism and the Venetian Variations of Vernon Lee, John Addington Symonds, and Arthur Symons', *The Year Book of English Studies, Vol. 40, No.1/2, The Arts in Victorian Literature* (2010), p. 217.
[178] 'Whistler', *Weekly Critical Review*, 2 (July 30, August 6, and 13, 1903), pp. 36-37., pp. 49-50., pp. 81-82. 'Fantin Latour and Whistler' (*Outlook* 15, Feb 25, 1905) 'A Second View of Whistler' (*Outlook* 15, Mar 4, 1905) 'On the Purchase of a Whistler for London' (*Outlook* 16, Aug 5, 1905) and 'Whistler at the Carfax Gallery' (*Outlook* 16, Nov 4 1905).
[179] Symons, 'On the Purchase of a Whistler for London', in *Studies on Modern Painters* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1925) p. 44.
[180] Symons, 'A Second View of Whistler', in *Studies on Modern Painters* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1925) p. 38.

> They have their brief coloured life like butterflies, and with the same momentary perfection. No one had ever cared to preserve just these aspects, as no one before Verlaine had ever cared to sing certain bird notes.… The real secret of Whistler, is that he does not try to catch the accident when an aspect becomes effective, but the instant when it becomes characteristically beautiful.[181]

Symons enumerates examples of the artists who have the eyes 'to seek truth before beauty' and who succeed in capturing the beautiful moment in their works 'from a selecting memory'. Symons prioritises the art of selection among a thousand random impressions surrounding him. While pursuing the Paterian aesthetic of capturing moments, Symons never aims for a simply minute description of everything before him; he is able to find the art of 'impressionistic writing' of his own, so he can prioritise the process of selection for the total

[181] Ibid., p. 39.

accomplishment of his art of impressionistic writing, which is also a 'subjective writing'.[182] Under the influences of the Paterian aesthetic and Lamb's method of city essays that deliver the lively atmosphere of a place, Symons carefully chooses the aspects of London for his impressionistic writing from among the myriad impressions that constantly attract his eyes.

The Baudelairean Pleasure of Flânerie

Jonathan Crary regards a nineteenth-century flâneur as 'a mobile consumer of a ceaseless succession of illusory commodity-like images',[183] and Symons deserves the title as a flâneur poet who carefully cuts out moments from among those that his eye catches during his random city prowling, focusing on hitherto forgotten aspects among the myriad daily impressions and matters in his poems. With regard to this effort in artistic subjectivity, since Symons empathises with

[182] Jesse Matz, *Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 12.
[183] Jonathan Crary, 'Modernity and the Problem of the Observer', in *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1992), p. 21.

Lamb's description, there are many commonalities between Lamb and Symons, such as the favourable gaze towards the motley crowd, for they regard people as essential factors that vitalise the mood of the place, where 'life awake'.[184] Symons respects city essayist Lamb's view that 'London itself is a pantomime and a masquerade'. They share the same 'insatiable desire to catch the new sights' that impelled him into 'night-walks about the crowded streets, finding fullness of Joy at so much life'.[185] Doubtless, Symons was a passionate spectator of urban space that is filled with people making clamorous noises, just as Lamb was. However, Symons was not satisfied with simply being a spectator of the new sights; he developed his voyeuristic passion into an aesthetic of flânerie of his own, honestly professing his respect for the precedent flâneur poet in Paris, Baudelaire, who recognises 'the tight symbiosis that ties him to Paris and that makes the city dependent on him to give it expression, to transmute its banality into gold'.[186] In *London: A Book of Aspects* (1909), Symons confesses that

[184] Symons, *A Study of Walter Pater* (London: Charles Sawyer, 1932), p. 58.
[185] Ibid., p. 58.
[186] Rosemary Lloyd, *Baudelaire's World* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002), p. 164.

'Baudelaire's phrase, "a bath of multitude", seemed to have been made for me'.[187] Symons writes his fresh excitement with strong consciousness of being alone in the midst of a crowd when he lived in Fountain Court at Temple in London:

> When I found myself alone, and in the midst of a crowd, I began to be astonishingly happy. I needed so little at the beginning of that time. I have never been able to stay long under a roof without restlessness, and I used to go out into the streets, many times a day, for the pleasure of finding myself in the open air and in the streets. I had never cared greatly for the open air in the country, the real open air, because everything in the country, except the sea, bored me; but here, in the 'motley' Strand, among these hurrying people, under the smoky sky, I could walk and yet watch.[188]

[187] Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks, 1909), p. 19.
[188] Symons, 'A Prelude to Life', in *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 32.

Solitude amid the multitude is the subject of the poetry that Baudelaire is attracted to, as seen in 'XII: Les Foules [Crowds]' in *Le Spleen de Paris* (posthumous publication, 1869):

> *Il n'est pas donné à chacun de prendre un bain de multitude: jouir de la foule est un art; et celui-là seul peut faire, aux dépens du genre humain, une ribote de vitalité, à qui une fée a insufflé dans son berceau le goût du travestissement et du masque, la haine du domicile et la passion du voyage.*
>
> *Multitude, solitude: termes égaux et convertibles pour le poète actif et fécond. Qui ne sait pas peupler sa solitude, ne sait pas non plus être seul dans une foule affairée.*

> [Not all men have the gift of enjoying a crowd-bath. Luxuriating in the throng is an art of its own, and the only man who can embark on an invigorating trip at the expense of the rest of mankind is he whose good fairy endowed him, in

> his cot, with a bent for disguises and masking, hatred of domestic humdrum, and wanderlust.
>
> Multitude and solitude are equal and interchangeable terms for the active and productive poet. Anyone who doesn't know how to people his solitude does not know, either, how to be alone in the midst of a bustling crowd.][189]

The 'solitude' Baudelaire aims for is not total isolation from his surroundings, for he thinks that 'multitude' and 'solitude' are interchangeable for the active and productive poet who can 'enjoy the unique privilege of being both himself and other people, at will'.[190] It is obvious that Symons is also an advocate of this kind of pleasure, as shown in his recollection of the moment when he was back to London from overseas: 'I am happy because I am in the midst of people, and happier still because they were all unknown to me'.[191] Both Baudelaire and Symons seek the pleasure of 'communion' with unknown others, interpreting this

[189] Charles Baudelaire, 'Les Foules', *Baudelaire Volume II: The Poems in Prose*, trans. by Francis Scarfe (London: Anvil Press, 1989), p. 58-59.
[190] Ibid., p. 59.
[191] Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks, 1909), p. 19.

trait as the ability to slip into another's state of mind as a privilege of the flâneur poet. With regard to this pursuit for the art of poetry, Baudelaire uses even more provocative expression—'*Qu'est-ce que l'art*? Prostitution'.[192] Only a poet who willingly slips into unknown others' minds can enjoy the intoxication of 'a bath of multitude' in great cities, while anonymous each other. Christopher Isherwood cites Baudelaire's words from *Fuseés*, 'the pleasure of being in crowds is a mysterious expression of sensual joy in the multiplication of Number'.[193] Both Baudelaire and Symons enthusiastically describe the moment of random encounters in the metropolitan cities, restlessly roaming around from crowd to crowd for new excitement—as if they could not remain motionless, sedentary spectators any longer. With 'the unique privilege of being both himself and other people', the flâneur poet can 'enter the personality of anyone else, whenever he likes' because 'for him alone, everything is a vacancy'.[194]

With regard to the representations of the 'flâneur' in literature, Walter

[192] Baudelaire, 'Fuseés', *Charles Baudelaire: Fuseés, Mon cœur mis à nu, La Belgique déshabillée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986) p. 6, p. 65.
[193] Christopher Isherwood, 'Translator's Preface', in *Intimate Journals,* by Charles Baudelaire (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1949), p.vii.
[194] Baudelaire, 'Les Foules', in *Baudelaire Volume II: The Poems in Prose*, trans. by Francis Scarfe (London: Anvil Press, 1989), p. 59.

Benjamin compares Edgar Allan Poe and Baudelaire. In Poe's 'The Man of the Crowd' (1840), the anonymous old man always slips into the middle of the crowd in London; the narrator finally describes him as 'the type and the genius of deep crime', for he refuses to be alone: 'He is the man of the crowd'.[195] Benjamin observes Poe's description of this figure: 'he is devoid of the connivance that Baudelaire had for it. To Poe, 'the *flâneur* was, above all, someone who does not feel comfortable in his own company'.[196] In Poe's tale, it seems that 'the crowd' functions exclusively as a hiding place for the flâneur; he seeks it to escape into the anonymity of the multitude of the city. As Benjamin observes, 'Poe purposely blurs the difference between a social person and the *flâneur.* The harder a man is to find, the more suspicious he becomes', as the relationship between a flâneur and the anonymous crowd is a device to close up the mysterious aspects of the city, evoking the crime scene in Poe's works. This contrasts completely with the flâneur in the works by Baudelaire or Symons; their flâneurs willingly plunge into the 'bath of multitude' to enjoy the temporal communion with unknown others.

[195]Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. by Harry Zohn (London: Verso, 1983), p. 48.
[196] Ibid., p. 48.

Therefore, Baudelairean/Symonsian solitude in the midst of the anonymous crowd does not exclusively mean an escape to a hiding place by criminals. Tracing the route of Poe's 'suspicious' flâneur equals a process of detecting the criminal but, on the other hand, the Baudelairean/Symonsian flâneur enlarges a circle of random encounters in the city, leaving an impression of 'the multiplication of number'[197] as a result of the pleasure of interchanges with the unknown other's mind, using 'the unique privilege of being both himself and other people'. As Toru Sato observes, the spectacle that the Baudelairean flâneur shows us could be interpreted as a kind of festive scene; the urban anonymity of the crowd temporarily blurs the border between people in a feverishly buoyant mood, dissipating notions such as class or occupation that usually contribute to dividing individuals.[198] Being anonymous in a crowd is, in a sense, an art of forgetting the bondage of one's own identity to 'enter the personality of anyone else, whenever he likes'. In the Baudelairean/Symonsian aestheticisation of hybrid urban space, in which people enjoy the pleasure of interchanges with unknown others without

[197]Isherwood, 'Translator's Preface', *Intimate Journals,* by Charles Baudelaire (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1949), p.vii.
[198] Toru, Sato, 'Baudelaire, Paris, and T. S. Eliot: A Genealogy of Flâneurs', *T.S. Eliot Review*, The T. S. Eliot Society of Japan (No.20, 2009), p. 66.

setting borders in a strange harmony, one can surely find an example of the cosmopolitan space these flâneur poets found in the nineteenth century. As Margueritte Murphy points out, Baudelaire resists the common analytic ploy of using differences among nations to erect a more earthbound hierarchy intended to 'assert the supremacy of any one nation over another' in *Salon de 1846*: behind such resistance is the questioning of common notions of the 'civilised' and the 'barbarous'.[199] This view endorses the praise of human diversity that characterises the urbaneness of their favourite cities in their works, the attitude of welcoming hybrid urban cityscape, always with fresh excitement and insatiable curiosity, as if they are seeing the spectacle for the first time. The effort to keep their 'fresh curiosity' and 'fresh excitement' again overlaps the requirement for a perfect intellectual. Said states: 'the man who finds his homeland sweet is still a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land'.[200] As Isherwood

[199] Margueritte Murphy, 'The Critic as Cosmopolite: Baudelaire's International Sensibility and the Transformation of Viewer Subjectivity', in *Art and Life in Aestheticism*, ed. by Kelly Comfort (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 27.
[200] Edward Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 7.

observes, Baudelaire was 'by nature, a city dweller' who was born and died in Paris; yet he was a poet who preferred the bohemian freedom of the Latin Quarter'.[201] In spite of his Parisian background, Baudelaire refused the identity of a 'local' settled in one place, instead allowing himself to float in the urban mobility. Symons was, as he professes in 'A Prelude to Life', a rootless wanderer, proud of his freedom from any bondage to a local origin. They were the advocates of the pleasure of flânerie, willingly plunging themselves into the mobility of their favourite cities, restlessly moving around on foot with insatiable curiosity. They always possessed fresh excitement as if they were visiting the place for the first time and finding new spectacles—seeing the entire city as if it were an unknown, foreign land.

London Nights

Symons energetically published a number of books of poems in the 1890s,

[201]Isherwood, 'Translator's Preface', in *Intimate Journals,* by Charles Baudelaire (London: Methuen & Co Ltd., 1949), p.vii.

the period when he most actively practised his aesthetic of flânerie; the most notable is *London Nights* (1895; 1897), his third book of poems after *Days and Nights* (1889) and *Silhouettes* (1892). These books made his name as a key figure in the *fin-de-siècle* literary scene, a representative of decadent poets for his choice of the subject; however, of course, Symons was not the one and only poet who was attracted to the artistic aim of exhibiting various cityscapes of late Victorian London. Among his contemporaries, for instance, fellow members of the Rhymers' Club such as John Davidson, Ernest Dowson, and Lionel Johnson wrote decadent poems reflecting both their personal experiences and the atmosphere of the city. They frequently expressed their private experiences as the subjects of their poetry; sentiments of despair, including lost-love episodes of their own, were favourite motifs for their poetry to exhibit the 'ennui' of their lives. However, in addition to these aesthetes, women poets of the age who explored the urban aesthetics in Victorian poetry, such as Alice Meynell and Amy Levy, should also be noted. As Ana Parejo Vadillo points out, Meynell turned to urban transport like the London impressionists Sidney Starr and Mortimer Menpes to depict bustling metropolitan life; Meynell used omnibuses, because

these vehicles allowed her to capture the city in motion and gave her a new perceptual paradigm with which to record lyrically the visual experience of London.[202] Compared to Meynell's perspective of a spectator atop an omnibus who views the people walking around like streams of colours, Levy's perspective was more private and restricted to an internal, smaller space because Levy was a city prowler who welcomed new experiences of her own. Vadillo regards the difference between them: 'unlike Amy Levy, for whom the passenger was a liberating figure, Meynell's position as a passenger is quite problematic because for her the passenger is a spectator, a critic of the "rhythm of life", and of the society of the spectacle'.[203] As seen in the poems in *A London Plane-Tree and Other Verse* (1889), Levy was a forerunner of the flâneur poet in London who walked around the city on foot and described the excitement of urban encounters in the 1880s. Among thousands of impressions she received during her ramblings, she carefully edited out moments for her poetry, which effectively appeal to the reader's eye as immediate reproductions of the urban scene with vivid liveliness.

[202]Ana Parejo Vadillo, *Women Poets and Urban Aestheticism: Passengers of Modernity* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 66-67.
[203] Ibid., p. 97.

Her poem 'A March Day in London' (1889) quite resembles Symons's 'April Midnight' (written on 23 April 1892); both succeed in exhibiting an urban experience that colourfully reflects the personal sentiment of the poet at the very moment in one day, aesthetically transforming a tiny episode into a special, 'miraculous' moment of one's life.[204] However, in spite of her foresightedness and challenges as a poet, Levy's reception seems still quieter than Symons's. Since Symons first published his books of poetry in the year 1889, he has been recognised as a leading poet in representing the atmosphere of Victorian *fin-de-siècle* London. In the background of this circumstance, we may find complex causes that worked to attract public interest in Symons as a poet of decadence.

After his debut, Symons contributed incessantly to periodicals, including the *Yellow Book*, which must have formed his image of a decadent poet. In 1893, in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, an article by Symons titled 'The Decadent Movement in Literature' appeared, praising the movement as 'really a new and

[204] Symons, 'April Midnight', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons: Volume 1 Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 140.

beautiful and interesting disease'.[205] While the decadent image had already been strongly attached to Symons, he treated subjects such as chance encounters with unknown women on the street and opium-smoking scenes in his poems even more boldly, like Baudelaire. Baudelaire had significant difficulties publishing his poems; only *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857) was published during his lifetime due to the ban by the regime of the Second Empire of his erotic, decadent subjects. Symons also had to face hardships on publication of *London Nights*. The first publication of *London Nights* was in 1895, the same year as Oscar Wilde's imprisonment, which damaged the public image of decadent figures. To make matters worse, the *Yellow Book,* to which Symons had contributed his poems, also greatly suffered from the harsh reactions of conservative readers in the aftershock of Wilde's downfall, because it was erroneously but widely reported that Wilde was carrying a copy of the *Yellow Book.*[206] A newspaper featured the headline 'WILDE ARRESTED: YELLOW BOOK UNDER HIS ARM' in April 1895.[207]

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[205] Symons, 'The Decadent Movement in Literature', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 87 (November 1893) p. 867.
[206] Mark W. Turner, 'Yellow Book', *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 692-694.
[207] Karl Beckson, ed., *The Oscar Wilde Encyclopaedia* (New York: AMS, 1998), p. 23.

Under these circumstances, the timing of the publication of Symons's new book of poems was actually the worst. It is understandable that many publishers hesitated to publish *London Nights*, and actually both John Lane of the *Yellow Book* and William Heinemann of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* refused the manuscript when Symons submitted it despite the recommendation of the reader who read it.[208] Symons describes these refusals as 'so inexplicable' in his letter to Edmund Gosse. Among Symons's works that had already appeared in periodicals, 'Stella Maris' (later included in *London Nights***)** was a piece regarded as especially immoral, for it evokes affairs between the poet Symons and an unknown woman, presumably a prostitute, while boldly using 'Stella Maris' as its title. Aubrey Beardsley's illustration 'Night Piece' (Figure 1) was attached to the first appearance of the poem in the *Yellow Book* 1 (April 1894); this combination of text and image must have solidified a conviction among readers that she must be a sexually available woman for the poet Symons, the 'Juliet of a Night', 'whose lips attach themselves vampire-like to his neck'.[209] Beardsley's

[208] John Davidson read the manuscript for Lane, sending a report anonymously, and recommended to publish 300 copies. Beckson, *Arthur Symon: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p. 112.
[209] Sally Ledger, 'Wilde Women and *The Yellow Book*: The Sexual Politics of

illustration of the woman in a black dress walking languidly through the inky black night evokes the impression that if readers enter the darkness, everything becomes uncertain. The blackness only enhances the whiteness of her décolleté that looms out of the night to lure her targets. As Mark Turner remarks, while 'Beardsley's illustration does not quite illustrate Symons's poem, there is clearly an inter-textual relationship between the two, not only in whom they seemingly depict (prostitutes), but also in the discursive formation each text is a part of—the gendered encounters and visual play of the city that are central to representations of urban experience'.[210] Both Symons's text and Beardsley's illustration contribute to the carefully implicated part of the other to exhibit the view of the urban experience of the poet in London for readers' eyes. This effectively linked the written scene and Symons's private vision; the formed image of the poet could rapidly and largely prevail through distribution of the periodicals.

In spite of such adverse circumstances, Symons was finally able to publish *London Nights* thanks to Leonard Smithers, who willingly took it. According to

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Aestheticism and Decadence', *English Literature in Transition 1880-1920* (50:1, 2007), p. 10.

[210] Mark W. Turner, 'Urban Encounters and Visual Play in the *Yellow Book*', *Encounters in the Victorian Press: Editors, Authors, Readers*, eds. by Laurel Brake and Julie F. Codell (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 142-143.

the checklist that Smithers printed at the Chiswick Press, after the printing of 500 copies of the first edition, 200 copies of the American issue were ordered in 1896, and then 400 copies of the second edition were printed in 1897.[211] This means that the book sold well, revealing that not a few Victorian readers still wanted to read Symons's 'decadent' works, in spite of the denunciation of Wilde. However, many reviewers harshly attacked not only the book but also Symons himself, calling him a 'dirty minded man' (*Pall Mall Gazette*, September 2, 1895). However, the reviewer in the *Times* exclusively praises Symons's 'Stella Maris' as 'graceful and melodious' among the works in the *Yellow Book*, 'a combination of English rowdiness with French lubricity' (April 18, 1894). Yeats writes that Symons deserves congratulation upon having written a book (*London Nights*) that, though it will arouse against him much prejudice, is the best he has done.[212] This reaction against Symons and his book as 'immoral' was probably predictable. Still, Symons could not overlook unjust broadsides that confused art and morality in their argument. In the preface to the second edition of *London Nights* (1897), he

[211] James G. Nelson, 'Appendices', *Publisher to the Decadents: Leonard Smithers in the Careers of Beardsley, Wilde, Dowson* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2000), pp. 296-303.
[212] R. F. Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life I. The Apprentice Mage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 154.

strongly asserts:

> I had expected opposition, I was prepared for a reasonable amount of prejudice: but I must confess to some surprise at the nature of the opposition, the extent of the prejudice […] I have been attacked, then, on the ground of morality, and by people who, in condemning my book, not because it is bad art, but because they think it bad morality, forget that they are confusing moral and artistic judgments, and limiting art without aiding morality.[213]

Furthermore, he carefully adds that 'I do not profess that any poem in this book is the record of actual fact'.[214] This is surely a negation of the possible assumption of readers/reviewers, who take everything in Symons's poems as a record of 'actual fact'. Symons continues, 'I declare that every poem is the sincere attempt

[213] Symons, 'Preface to the Second Edition of London Nights', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 1: Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 165.
[214] Ibid., pp. 166 -167.

to render a particular mood which has once been mine, and to render it as if for the moment, there were no other mood for me in the world'.[215] In spite of Symons's defensive explanation that tries to negate the rapid assumptions of readers about affairs between Symons and a prostitute, at least, as Yeats called Symons 'a scholar in music halls', Symons was then already known as a frequent, passionate visitor of music halls and their promenades, where the presence of prostitutes with heavy makeup was a fact. According to Charles Booth's survey, 'it is said that the ladies' public lavatories and dress-rooms in central London are used for putting on and washing off, the customary paint', and theatre people were believed to be no different from common prostitutes because of their provocative makeup, free and easy manner, self-sufficiency, and notorious reputations for moral laxity.[216] Symons was surely lured by the dancers, since he writes poems about them, including his girlfriend, Lydia, a music hall ballet dancer (she appears as 'Bianca' in Symons's poems). However, as Beckson surmises, in writing about people around theatres in 'Maquillage' (1891), 'To a Dancer' (1892), or 'At the

[215] Ibid., p. 167.
[216] Beckson, 'Prostitutes on the Promenade', *London in the 1890s : A Cultural History* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992), p. 115.

Stage Door' (1893), Symons might have 'gone further' by suggesting a connection between the theatrical performer and the prostitute in the effect produced by makeup, thereby offering limitless possibilities of 'fantasy'.[217] Whatever the actual fact or half-imagery, the cityscape Symons gives reminds us of the aim of flânerie claimed by Baudelaire, '*cette sainte prostitution de l'âme*' [the saintly prostitution of the soul] in 'Les Foules'. [218] This is the artistic 'communion' for the poet who can slip into another's mind to deliver the pleasure of temporal interchanges between himself and unknown others through his poems. For this purpose, the poet is a 'dreamer'[219] with privileged eyes who can always find a new spectacle in the motley, clamorous city, but he does not necessarily have to take action to experience new excitement. Just as Baudelaire values 'the viewing experiences' for his aesthetic,[220] Symons finds the subject for his poetry. The preface to the second edition of *London Nights* reveals his confident

[217] Ibid., p. 113.
[218] Baudelaire, 'Les Foules', *Baudelaire Volume II: The Poems in Prose*, trans. by Francis Scarfe (London: Anvil Press, 1989), pp. 58-59.
[219] Symons frequently refers himself as 'a dreamer', as in 'April Midnight'. With regard to the private life of Symons in the mid-1890s, W. B. Yeats, who lived in the same flat in Fountain Court, London, writes that Symons did not have such a life as a 'dirty-minded man' in *Autobiography*.
[220] Margueritte Murphy, 'The Critic as Cosmopolite: Baudelaire's international Sensibility and the Transformation of Viewer Subjectivity', *Art and Life in Aestheticism: De- Humanizing and Re-Humanizing Art, the Artist, and the Artistic Recepter*, ed. by Kelly Comfort (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 27.

readiness to pursue his own aesthetic of poetry that he has acquired by way of Pater, Lamb, and Baudelaire. After asserting his claim against the negative reviews that do not argue art and morality separately, Symons clearly states his aim in poetry:

> The moods of men! There I find my subject, there the region over which art rules: and whatever has once been a mood of mine, though it has been no more than a ripple on the sea, and had no longer than that ripple's duration, I claim the right to render, if I can, in verse: and I claim, from my critics and my readers, the primary understanding that a mood is after all but a mood, a ripple on the sea, and perhaps no longer than that ripple's duration. I do not profess that any poem in this book is the record of the actual fact: I declare that every poem is the sincere attempt to render a particular mood which has once been mine, and to render it as if, for the moment, there were

no other mood for me in the world.[221]

In Symons's artistic aim, emphasised here as 'the mood of men', one can find the influence of Paul Verlaine, to whom Symons dedicates *London Nights*. In fact, Symons repeatedly cites Verlaine's '*Car nous voulons la Nuance encor, Pas la Couleur, rien que la nuance!*' from *Art Poétique* (1874) in essays such as 'The Decadent Movement in Literature' (first appeared in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* in November 1893) and also in 'Paul Verlaine' in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899). Symons's strong empathy for Verlaine, who always seeks 'nuance' in poetry, supports Symons's prioritisation of subjective eyes that carefully capture the mood of men; for him, the cityscape is attractive because various people coexist there as coloured particles in a fuzzy unity, as in an impressionist painting. Symons is not interested in giving a rigid outline of a place as if it is an imitation of actual fact. The avoidance of objective reality is obvious in Symons. He states, 'The Impressionist, in literature as in paintings,

[221] Symons, 'Preface to the Second Edition of *London Nights*', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 1: Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 166.

would flash upon you in a new, sudden way so exact an image of what you have just seen, just as you have seen it', to reveal the 'soul of the landscape—the soul of whatever corner of the visible world has to be realised'.[222] This is quite a subjective attitude of the poet, to urge readers to share the urban experience just as he has seen it with fresh sensation. Symons sees that 'The real London is not a city of uniform brightness, like Paris, nor of savage gloom, Like Prague; it is a picture continually changing, a continual sequence of pictures, and there is no knowing what mean street corner may not suddenly take on a glory not its own'.[223] This is a sincere attempt to exhibit 'the moods of men' by a flâneur poet who is strongly magnetised by the ever-changing panorama of the metropolitan city where various people coexist, because such moments are so ephemeral and instantly escape if he does not capture them in words. For Symons, the landscape does not appeal if it lacks the aspects of the 'human'; a ballet dancer in music halls, an anonymous woman on a pavement, a beggar, or a Romany knife thrower, and the poet Symons as a dreamer—his artistic passion is always devoted to

[222]Symons, 'The Decadent Movement in Literature', *Dramatis Personae* (Indianapolis: Bobbs- Merrill Company, 1923), pp. 96-117.
[223] Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks, 1908), p. 6.

capturing the view that 'someone' surely contributes to create the mood of the place. For Symons, humanity is a great factor for enlivening the cityscape, and his poems about London are also the result of such sincere attempts to capture the very beautiful moment among thousands of random impressions. This task must essentially require the subjective choice, as Baudelaire prioritises 'viewer subjectivity',[224] to decide which aspect will be cut out for his art amid the randomness of moments that pass in everyday life. 'It is so easy to go through day after day, busily and agreeably, without ever really living for a single instant. Art begins when a man wishes to immortalise the most vivid moment he has ever lived'.[225] The process of such a subjective choice already reflects the poet's art. Symons vigorously closes upon anonymous figures on the streets, who would generally have been regarded as inadequate subjects for the art of poetry. Symons knows that his eye could find a certain beauty in every corner of the city where 'the soul of place' exists, surely contributing to create 'the mood of men' for the

[224] Murphy, 'The Critic as Cosmopolite: Baudelaire's international Sensibility and the Transformation of Viewer Subjectivity', *Art and Life in Aestheticism: De-Humanizing and Re-Humanizing Art, the Artist, and the Artistic Recepter*, ed. by Kelly Comfort (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 25.
[225] Symons, 'The Choice', *Studies in Prose and Verse* (London: JM Dent, 1904), pp. 290-291.

subjects of his art; it is the task of a flâneur poet that Symons has found.

The Snapshot Technique of Nineteenth-Century Flâneur and the Twentieth-Century Amateur Photographer

Symons's artistic attempt as a Victorian flâneur poet to capture beautiful moments that attract his eyes seems to be the same kind of impulse felt by twentieth-century tourists who roam around a city looking for the best view to capture in their photographs. With regard to this affinity, John Urry observes, 'The strolling *flâneur* was a forerunner of the twentieth-century tourist and in particular of *the* activity which has in a way become emblematic of the tourist: the democratised taking of photographs—of being seen and recorded and seeing others and recording them'.[226] Urry compares the nineteenth-century *flâneur*'s vision of cityscapes for his art to that of the twentieth-century amateur photographer and tourist, citing Sontag's *On Photography*:

[226] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1997) p. 138.

> In fact, photography first comes into its own as an extension of the eye of the middle-class *flâneur*, whose sensibility was so accurately charted by Baudelaire. The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitring, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes. Adept at the joys watching, connoisseur of empathy, the *flâneur* finds the world 'picturesque'.[227]

Both Sontag and Urry see that the nineteenth-century flâneur is especially attracted to the dark side of the urban cityscapes as 'urban inferno', different from the twentieth-century tourists with cameras in their hands. In fact, Urry distinguishes between them by noting that 'while the middle-class *flâneur* was attracted to the city's dark seamy corners, the twentieth-century photographer is

[227] Suzan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 55.

attracted everywhere, to every possible object, event and person'.[228] It is highly probable that when they mention the term '*flâneur*' in their arguments, they are first imagining Baudelaire and his works. Like Baudelaire, Symons is in fact attracted to the dark side of urban cityscapes, but Symons does not describe such a sight exclusively as dark and miserable, because if the view did not offer something attractive, a certain beauty to his eyes, he would not have treated it. As a poet who prioritises his subjective view, Symons devoutly searches everywhere for a beautiful moment to be picked up for his art, even in the generally forgotten corners of the city. According to Urry's classification, Symons is much closer to 'the twentieth-century photographer' type, who is 'attracted everywhere, to every possible object, event and person'.[229] With regard to the twentieth-century tourists who walk around with cameras in their hands, Urry continues with the following insights:

> And, at the same time the photographer is also observed and

[228] John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), p. 138.
[229] Ibid., p. 138.

> photographed. One is both see-er and seen. To be a photographer in the twentieth century, and that is so much part of travel and tourism, is also to be seen and photographed.[230]

Marshall Berman regards the structure of the gaze in urban space as the 'family of the eyes', a concept that had already emerged in cosmopolitan cities such as Paris in the nineteenth century. [231] Berman, in particular, argues that the boulevards and cafés created a new kind of space where lovers could be 'private in public',[232] a space that allowed them a romantic experience 'in front of the endless parades of strangers moving up and down the boulevards—it was those strangers they gazed upon and who in turn gazed at them'.[233] As Symons and Baudelaire willingly enjoy the solitude among the multitude, they are able to see their own vision while gazing at the passers-by with insatiable curiosity, for the flâneur

[230] Ibid., p. 138.
[231] Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London and New York: 2010), p. 152.
[232] Ibid., p. 152.
[233] Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), p. 137.

poet's pen is always ready to take a snapshot of the best moment. For them, urban space serves as an artificial paradise providing 'an endlessly fascinating source of curiosity'.[234]

> They could weave veils of fantasy around the multitude of passers-by: who were these people, where did they come from and where were they going, what did they want, whom did they love? The more they saw of others and showed themselves to others—the more they participated in the extended 'family of eyes'—the richer became their vision of themselves.[235]

In the extended circle of 'family of eyes', we can find the same kind of image that Baudelaire called 'multiplication of number'; flâneur poets were already aware of the fact that 'the more they participated in the extended "family of eyes"—the

[234] Ibid., p. 137.
[235] Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London and New York: 2010), p. 152.

richer became their vision of themselves'. With insatiable curiosity, flâneur poets willingly view and live others' lives, calling it 'communion' or 'sacred prostitution' because they knew the pleasure of both being imaginative gazers and being gazed upon. Each person contributes to enlivening the cityscape, ever expanding the 'family of eyes'.

John Tomlinson observes that Urry 'makes about the relationship of the growth in popular travel and tourism to the development of what he calls "aesthetic cosmopolitanism"', comparing the 'late-twentieth-century aesthetic cosmopolitanism with that cultivated by the British aristocracy and gentry in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries'.[236] However, as revealed in Chapter 1, according to Urry's table of aesthetic cosmopolitanism, while Symons was most active as a poet in the late Victorian period, his view and attitude as a travelling poet were significantly matched to the aesthetic cosmopolitanism of the twentieth century, from his stance of openness towards divergent experiences in foreign lands to 'a search for and delight in contrasts between societies rather than

[236] John Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 200-201.

a longing for uniformity or superiority'.[237] Finally, Urry's re-examination of the feature of flâneur poets in the nineteenth century and citation of Sontag regarding twentieth-century amateur photographers further enhance an impression that not only as a tourist but also as a flâneur, Symons is much closer to the type of twentieth-century amateur photographers defined by Urry and Sontag, both in purpose and awareness about the possibility/impossibility of capturing a moment of one's urban experience. Sontag observes that photography 'seems' to be a means of transcribing reality:

> The images produced appear to be not statements about the world but pieces of it, or even miniature slices of reality. A photograph thus seems to furnish evidence that something did indeed happen — that someone was there or that the mountain actually was that large. It is thought that the camera does not lie.[238]

[237] Ibid., p. 200.
[238] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 109.

She adds, 'Yet in fact photographs are the outcome of an active signifying practice in which those taking the photo select, structure and shape what is going to be taken'.[239] Behind 'a photograph', we can find a great deal of 'active signifying practices'. From the timing of releasing the shutter to the angle and choice of object, an amateur photographer actually makes subjective choices, even though this is quite easy due to the portability of cameras. Therefore, as an art, 'photography is a promiscuous way of seeing which cannot be limited to an elite'.[240] As Jonathan Crary points out, 'If it can be said there is an observer specific to the nineteenth century, or to many period, it is only as an "effect" of an irreducibly heterogeneous system of discursive, social, technological, and institutional relations. There is no observing subject prior to this continually shifting field',[241] given that a perspective by a genuinely 'objective' observer is impossible. Against the background of Symons's frequent emphasis on the importance of subjectivity as his artistic aim for impressionistic writing, one can surmise that he has known that the effort to describe the scene in front of him

[239] Ibid., p. 109.
[240] Ibid., p. 131.
[241] Jonathan Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London) p. 6.

always and inevitably reflects the poet himself, because his present view cannot escape the accumulated influences of his past, in the net of the complex surroundings enclosing him as social codes and conventions, even if Symons tried to refuse any bondage of local origin or sense of belonging as a self-identified rootless wonderer. 'An observer is more importantly one who sees within a prescribed set of possibilities, one who is embedded in a system of conventions and limitations'.[242] Symons actually shows his awareness about the impossibility of genuinely 'objective' observation and writes about the futility of such an attempt in his literary essay on Émile Zola, one of the representative novelists of Naturalism: 'The art of Zola is nature seen through a formula. This professed realist is a man of theories who studies life with a conviction that he will find there such and such things which he has read about in scientific books. He observes, indeed, with astonishing minuteness, but he observes in support of preconceived ideas'.[243] Symons points out the paradoxical aspect of an objective observer, because such an attempt is already a very subjective intention: 'He

[242] Ibid., p. 6.
[243] Symons, 'A Note on Zola's Method', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p. 162.

[Zola] has never looked at life impartially, he has never seen it as it is'.[244] Zola's literature does not appeal to Symons because in 'the far more important observation of men and women, he is content with second-hand knowledge, the knowledge of a man who sees the world through a formula'.[245] Symons finally regards Zola's realism as 'distorted idealism', concluding that 'the man, who considers himself the first to paint humanity as it really is will be remembered in the future as the most idealistic writer of his time'.[246] Symons considers that literary passion to describe a cityscape should be devoted to capturing the most effective moment among his own impressions acquired there, on foot. The reality of urbaneness cannot be represented without the existence of men and women; therefore, the long, minute description of a table or chairs occupying the space cannot fulfil the task.

In spite of this awareness and scepticism about the writing of 'reality', it is ironic but understandable that reviewers and readers in the 1890s rapidly assumed that Symons's 'real' persona must be that of a 'dirty-minded man' with an

[244] Ibid., p. 164.
[245] Ibid., p. 164.
[246] Ibid., p. 164.

immoral life, treating his poems as if they were photos of evidence. Many doubtlessly thought that everything in Symons's poems was actual fact, confused by the snapshot-like vivid cut of the cityscape the poet gave. But his colourful 'impressionistic writing' does not mean he simply exhibited the reality in front of him objectively, as though the moment were replayed like a scene from a film. For the artistic aim to deliver 'the mood' of the city with certain beauty, the subjective decision of when and which moment to cut out for his art was incessantly queried. During his roaming through tumultuous London, he had thousands of random impressions. Symons carefully chose the best moments to capture for his poems. The flâneur poet Symons never aimed to describe the view in front of him without making careful choices. Symons used 'active signifying practices' to determine and capture the view for his poem without missing any valuable moments. Therefore, he did not miss the tiny but very precious moments that happened one day in April—'in the miraculous April weather' while 'Wandering lost in the night of London'.[247]

[247]Symons, 'April Midnight', in *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 1: Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 140.

Cutting Out the Diversity of Human Lives in London

A characteristic of Symons is, as Yeats admits, that 'he has an ability to slip into a state of mind'[248] that is beyond sympathy to others. This trait was fully exhibited not only in his private life but also in his writings, greatly differentiating his works from those of many of his contemporaries. Symons could narrate the life of anyone, whether fictive or real, that he had met sometime in his life, even if the meeting was no more than a brief, chance encounter, as if he joined the multiplication of 'I' in his writings. Even when he wrote a critical essay on Shakespeare's play *Antony and Cleopatra* (first appeared in *The Henry Irving Shakespeare* Volume VI, 1889),[249] Symons could not review it in a detached manner, as seen in his exclamation about the state of Cleopatra's mind in the last moment of her life: T.S. Eliot did not hide his astonishment as he read, because

[248] 'Symons, more than any man I have ever known, could slip as it were into the mind of another'. Yeats, 'The Trembling of the Veil', in *The Collected Works of Y. B. Yeats Volume III: Autobiographies* (New York: Scribner, 1999), p. 246.
[249] The essay, 'Notes to Antony and Cleopatra' is included in Symons's *Studies in Two Literature* (1897) and *Studies in the Elizabethan Drama* (1919).

'Mr. Symons is living through the play'.[250]

Symons thus frequently exhibited this trait no matter what style of writing he used, but it is especially evident in monologue-style poems, even when he writes about a historical/mythical figure in the past or a female figure. For example, in the poem 'Modern Beauty',[251] by which, Ezra Pound states, 'The 1890s are fairly represented',[252] Symons infiltrates himself into the state of mind of an anonymous woman, presumably a once young and attractive prostitute. Through her, Symons starts recalling her life, which is overlapped by those of historical women who have changed one's life in history. In the poem, Symons uses 'I' instead of 'She'.

I Am the torch, she saith, and what to me

If the moth die of me? I am the flame

Of Beauty, and I burn that all may see

[250] Eliot, 'The Perfect Critic', *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975), p. 51.
[251] Symons, 'Modern Beauty', 'Images of Good and Evil', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons*, Vol. 2 (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 82.
[252] Ezra Pound, *Profile: An Anthology Collected in MCMXXXI*,(Milan: J. Scheiwiller, 1932), p. 14-15.

Beauty, and I have neither joy nor shame,

But live with that clear life of perfect fire

Which is to men the death of their desire.

I am Yseult and Helen, I have seen

Troy burn, and the most loving knight lie dead.

The world has been my mirror, time has been

My breath upon the glass; and men have said,

Age after age, in rapture and despair,

Love's poor few words, before mine image there.

[…]

Yet now the day is darkened with eclipse:

Who is there lives for beauty. Still am I

The torch, but where's the moth that still dares die?

Karl Schneider praises this poem as a masterpiece, for Symons has succeeded in

sublimating a personal experience into the universal.[253] The woman depicted here would be, in a sense, one living amidst the multitudes in London. However, when we notice her pride, which is similar to that the legendary figure of 'Yseult' or mythical 'Helen', the anonymous woman's history suddenly appeals to us with the dignity of a historical or mythical aura; she becomes someone who just happens to appear on the street of Victorian London. By exhibiting the transparent layers of the images of present and past to the reader, Symons attempts to make us confirm the link that has continued eternally unchanged since ancient times, as long as humans have existed.

Markert asserts that the great stories of the past are fascinating to Symons because they 'embody the universals of human feeling, and their relevance, as well as their reality, continues to manifest itself in contemporary life'.[254] When Symons declared 'the great stories are repeated in our days',[255] he must have been conscious of the never-changing cycle of humanity, repeated for ages in

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[253] Karl Schneider, 'Poets in Fin-de-siècle England: Commentary', *The Savoy*, ed. and trans. by Shoichi Watanabe, ed. by Shuji Takanashi (Tokyo: Taishukan, 1987), p. 53-71.

[254]Lawrence Markert, *Arthur Symons: The Critic of the Seven Arts* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Research Press, 1988), p. 25.

[255] Symons, *Plays, Acting, and Music* (London: Archibald Constable, 1909), p. 211.

perpetual patterns. Symons supported this view even though he was living in late Victorian London, where the theories of Darwinism and Degeneration had taken the public by storm, perceived by many intellectuals as a new and sweeping theory of evolution. As Lewis analyses, 'By presenting life in all its randomness, the modern novel suggests that the randomness itself contains a pattern',[256] Symons must have discovered this idea as well; therefore, he incessantly employs a pattern of unchanged humanity by using the double image of past and present. It should be noted here that the second edition of *London Nights* (1897) starts with the poem 'Prologue: Before the Curtain'[257]:

> We are the puppets of a shadow-play,
>
> We dream the plot is woven of our hearts,
>
> Passionately we play the selfsame parts
>
> Our fathers have played passionately yesterday,
>
> And our sons play to-morrow.

[256] Pericles Lewis, 'Churchgoing in the Modern Novel', *MODERNISM/modernity*, Vol.11, No.4 (2004), p. 672.
[257] Symons, 'Prologue: Before the Curtain', 'London Nights', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons*, *Vol.2 (*London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 169.

[…]

We pass, and have our gesture; love and pain

And hope and apprehension and regret

Weave ordered lines into a pattern set

Not for our pleasure, and for us in vain.

The gesture is eternal: we who pass,

Pass on the gesture; we, who pass, pass on

One after one into oblivion,

As shadows dim and vanish from a glass.

Every tiny episode in our lives creates a pattern, repeated eternally as long as the world exists, unchanged. Symons writes, 'I find that humanity (passion, desire, the spirit of the senses, the hell or heaven of man's heart) is part of the eternal substance which nature weaves in the rough for art to combine cunningly into beautiful patterns'.[258] This remark endorses Symons's commitment to Nietzsche.

[258] Symons, 'Preface to the Second Edition of London Nights', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 1: Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 165.

In the scene 'Of the Vision and the Riddle' in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1885), the superman Zarathustra is struck by the Dwarf's contemptuous words: 'All truth is crooked and time itself is a circle'. He painfully questions himself: 'Must we not return eternally?'[259] But at the end in 'The Convalescent', he accepts the circle that eternally continues, proclaiming, 'I myself am amongst the causes of the eternal recurrence. I come again, with this sun, with this earth, with this Eagle, with this Serpent—*not* to a new life, or to a better life, or to a similar life—I come again to the self-same life, in greatest things and in least, that I may teach again the Eternal Recurrence of all things'.[260] The earliest introduction of Nietzsche to England was probably the series of articles by Havelock Ellis that first appeared in April 1896 in the literary periodical *The Savoy*, which Symons edited. Ellis reports the reaction of the German public as a 'war-cry of opposing factions' and writes, 'we may expect a similar outburst in England now that a complete translation of his works has begun to appear'.[261] Nietzsche's ideas such as 'the eternal recurrence' that negates any changes for the coming next stage of one's

[259] Friedrich Nietzsche, trans. by M.M. Bozman, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 142.
[260] Ibid., p. 196.
[261] Havelock Ellis, 'Friedrich Nietzsche: I', *The Savoy*, Vol. II, April (1896), p. 79.

life, with a cry of 'God is dead' by the superman Zarathustra on the mountain top, can be reconciled with neither Darwinism, which 'welcomes more and more difference', nor with pious Christianity.[262] After Ellis, Symons writes brief essays on Nietzsche without concealing his delighted surprise: 'I never take up Nietzsche without the surprise of finding something familiar'.[263] In *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, Symons writes about the art of Balzac, but this inevitably reveals Symons's view, too:

> 'There is but one animal' he declares, in his *Avant-Propos*, with a confidence which Darwin has not yet come to justify… that is to say, human beings and the material representation which they give to their thought; in short, man and life.… Believing, as we do now, in nerves and a fatalistic heredity, we have left but little room for the dignity and disturbance of violent emotion. To Balzac, humanity had not changed since

[262] Rachel Bowlby, *Freudian Mythologies: Greek Tragedy and Modern Identity (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 229.
[263] Symons, 'Nietzsche on Tragedy', *Plays, Acting and Music* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1903),p. 9.

> the days when Œdipus was blind and Philoctetes cried in the cave; and equally great miseries were still possible to mortals, though they were French and of Nineteenth century.… 'Can man by thinking find out God?'[264]

Symons does not mention Nietzsche's name here, but it is highly probable that Symons was conscious of Nietzsche's works, especially *The Birth of Tragedy* or *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, when he wrote this. Bell points out the impact of Nietzsche on early twentieth-century poets such as Pound, who were passionate about applying classical myth to describing contemporary life: 'whatever his actual influence may have been, Nietzsche's critique of Western tradition represents a radical turning-point and a dilemma with which we are still coming to terms'.[265] However, for Symons, who had already read Nietzsche in French translation[266] because he could not stand having been tantalised by waiting for an

[264] Symons, 'Balzac', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p. 101-109.
[265] Michael Bell, *Literature, Modernism and Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 19.
[266] Symons, 'Nietzsche on Tragedy', *Plays, Acting and Music* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1903), p. 9.

English translation, Nietzsche must have appealed to him, sharing a sympathetic stance on art and humanity. Symons reveals his view that the eternally repeated pattern of life is a show on the stage in the poem 'Prologue: Before the Curtain'. We humans are all passionately playing 'the selfsame part'[267] from the ancient past to the future. Symons writes that 'as we brush aside the accidents of daily life, in which men and women imagine that they are alone touching reality, we come closer to humanity, to everything in humanity that may have begun before the world and may outlast it.[268] For Symons, the past is not a detached space where savage people lived, because humans always share the same humanity and we are just repeating our roles in the same pattern, eternally. In his poems, Symons faithfully practices his aesthetic to represent the moods of men, the impressions he had in his life. From the fresh delight of the meeting at night to the agony of the sleepless night because of heartbreak, many of them are very personal. But Symons knows that every tiny moment is repeated in a pattern forever, somewhere all over the world, somewhere in the past, unchanged—no better, no

[267] Symons, 'Prologue: Before the Curtain', 'London Nights', *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons*, Vol. 1 (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 169.
[268] Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p. 5.

worse, just the same. Such understanding of Symons may look pessimistic or world-weary, just as Nietzsche has largely been regarded so: but unlike others of Symons's decadent poet contemporaries, such as Ernest Dowson or Lionel Johnson, Symons never praises suicidal desire, although he lived in the period of 'suicide craze'.[269] In fact, he writes, 'I am afraid of death to-day' in the poem 'At the Morgue' (written in May 1894).[270] As Ruth Temple points out, in Symons's work, there is 'no hatred, no blasphemy, no acedia, no expense of spirit in a waste of shame', unlike Baudelaire', and 'A Contrast of the vocabularies of the two poets is instructive'.[271] Beckson supports this view, citing Symons's 'Credo', the last poem in *London Nights*, and pointing out that the sentiment (or, rather, sentimentality) here is not Baudelaire's.

> If he has loved or laboured, and has known
>
> A strenuous virtue, or a strenuous sin;

[269] John Stokes, 'Tired of Life: Letters, Literature and the Suicide Craze', *In the Nineties* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 115-143.
[270] This poem is included in *Knave of Hearts* (1913). Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 3: Poems* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 36.
[271] Ruth Zabriskie Temple, *The Critic's Alchemy*: *A Study of the Introduction of French Symbolism into England* (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1953), p. 138.

Then, being dead, his life was not all vain.

While Symons frequently depicts the experience of misery through the harsh treatment of his girlfriend in his poems with deep experience and feeling, as typical decadent poets do, he readily accepts his role as a human who composes the eternal cycle of history from the past and the future. This readiness and belief in the universal humanity is in fact the fundamental part of being cosmopolitan. Such an attitude is in fact admitted in his works, proving his strong and quite positive will to live the given life, to participate in the great pattern of humanity, 'that may have begun before the world and may outlast it'.[272] Supported by this view, Symons is able to shed light on various lives in London streets. When gazing at the multitude, Symons's eye never ignores the variety of each tiny existence, the individual who creates the hybrid view of London as an 'ever-changing panorama'. This view runs contrary to Poe's emphasis on the singular, gross image of the multitude, which is an effective setting for detective stories. As Nicholas Freeman points out, London during the Victorian

[272] Ibid., p. 5.

fin-de-siècle was hardly difficult to summarise in one concept: 'In short, London was the site of all kinds of intellectual cross-pollination, and its leading writers and artists were keenly sensitive to developments in their respective fields'.[273] In fact, Symons is able to describe the reduced image of international talents as a hybrid view in which various international talents gathered to enliven the literary circle in Victorian London:

> We had Joseph Conrad, who brought out of Poland a new, brooding, mysterious quality into English literature. […] We have had Henry James, who was a continental American in love with England, a mysterious artist, less like Bourget than any living writer, and George Moore, not at all like Zola, who was once our only realist, and who will always remain the Irishman in love with France. We have George Bernard Shaw […] We have in Max Beerbohm a dainty sharp-shooter, whose arrows fly at random but never miss. But all these

[273] Nicholas Freeman, *Conceiving the City: London, Literature, and Art 1870-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 13.

> energies, no two are working in the same direction, or working with the same aims; they are scarcely conscious of one another's existence, and if any one of them is to characterise a period, all the others will have to come in as exceptions.[274]

In his poems and city essays, Symons writes about every individual under the London sky, from Armenian dancers to Romany tarot readers and knife throwers to Spanish music hall dancers to unknown women and beggars on the pavement; all equally contribute as essential pigments to create the whole, the ever-changing colour of London. As one of the significant features of his books of poems, from *Days and Nights* (1889) to *London Nights* (1895; 2nd ed., 1897) to *Images of Good and Evil* (1899) to *The Fool of the World* (1906), the narrator randomly changes in each poem but succeeds in synthesising a certain harmonious tone, a nuance, under the title of each book. This attempt of Symons reminds us of the careful attitude of Jean-Luc Nancy, who claims in *Être singulier pluriel* (1996) that he

[274] Symons, 'Art and the English Public', *A Study of Oscar Wilde* (London: Charles J. Sawyer, 1930), pp. 9-10.

strongly wants to suggest the term *mêlée*, instead of *mélange*, to describe the image of a cosmopolitan city as a big whole to avoid the simplification of 'others'.[275]

The colours that composed Symons's *London Nights* were the golds and pinks of theatre footlights, a forgotten 'violet' in the corner of the street, and a cloudy opal in the stone of the poet's ring. These different pigments surely contribute to creating the total nuance of the colour of London, as a city embodying the 'mood of men'; Symons's 'impressionistic writing' surely succeeds in exhibiting the bird's-eye-view image of London with close-ups of ever-changing colours inside. As Stange observes, Symons evokes a landscape that is new to English poetry; Symons projects a bizarre sense of the colour, the harshness, the almost brutal artificiality of London and Paris at the end of the century,[276] but it seems Symons never tried to create one solid and strong colour by mixing up the others. Instead, his efforts are dedicated to exhibiting a view like a Pointillist impressionistic painting by Georges Seurat, in which each different pigment creates the total

[275] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Être singulier pluriel* (Paris: Galilée, 1996), p. 220.
[276] G. Robert Stange, 'The Frightened Poets', in *The Victorian City: Images and Realities Vol.2*, ed. H.J. Dyos and M. Wolff (London Routledge, 1973), p. 492.

nuance without losing its own colour in its place.

Victorian London was already a cosmopolitan city that attracted all kinds of people from overseas. Being attracted by the diversity of London's cityscape, Symons found his task as a poet to be to capture the valuable moments, enjoying the pleasure of flânerie that was at the same time a praise of the multicultural urban space.

The Possibility of Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism, Aesthetic Disposition

As a flâneur poet, Symons practised the aesthetic of flânerie without setting any boundaries between unknown others, just as Baudelaire did. These aspects support the fundamental backbone of his aesthetic cosmopolitanism: to enjoy the mobility of the urban cities with openness to new experiences and new cultures. As Murphy observes, it is the process of redefining beauty that is key to the aesthetic of modernity. Baudelaire reveals his desire to articulate and advocate for an aesthetic, and even an aestheticism, that was fully human, that is, one that

engages fully the human sensorium.[277]Baudelaire interprets the 'universal' as 'cosmopolitan' and thereby expands and refines his notion of 'relative beauty',[278] a concept that also overlaps Symons's view.

The Symonsian view of the world must surely be categorised as a type of aesthetic cosmopolitanism: at least, in his literature, one can hardly feel Symons's enthusiastic intention to change readers' world views. However, while the majority of Symons's poems and essays about London are filled with aesthetically impressionistic writings to deliver 'the soul of place' and 'the mood of men' as they are, an exceptional case for Symons is found: He inserts short and strong remarks as if he is strongly urging readers to question their current circumstances. In *London: A Book of Aspects* (1908), more than 10 years after his *London Nights* (1895), Symons deplores the inevitable change of the city, saying that industrialisation has caused 'an automobilisation of the mind'.[279]

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[277] Murphy, 'The Critic as Cosmopolite: Baudelaire's International Sensibility and the Transformation of Viewer Subjectivity', *Art and Life in Aestheticism: De-Humanizing and Re-Humanizing Art, the Artist, and the Artistic Recepter*, ed. by Kelly Comfort (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), p. 26.
[278] Ibid., p. 26.
[279] Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks, 1908), p. 13.

> London was once habitable, in spite of itself. The machines have killed it. The old, habitable London exists no longer. Charles Lamb could not live in this mechanical city, out of which everything old and human has been driven by wheels and hammers and the fluids of noise and speed.… No one will take a walk down Fleet Street any more, no one will shed tears of joy in the motley Strand, no one will be leisurable any more, or turn over old books at a stall, or talk with friends at the street corner.[280]

This part appears just after Symons's recollections of having once enjoyed walking around (and jumping) in the vast field of Hampstead Heath, tasting fresh air and green things. Therefore, the contrast of the image of suffocating, grey-coloured London is visually enhanced with his impressionistic writing: 'In London men work as if in darkness, scarcely seeing their own hands as they work,

[280] Ibid., p. 13.

and not knowing the meaning of their labour'.[281] The paragraph cuts in sharply to highlight and question the people 'currently' working like wheels in a big machine, without knowing the pleasure of flânerie, for Symons detests the monotonous view of the 'once habitable' London, where 'no one will be leisurable any more'. As Regenia Gagnier points out, Symons's 'impressionistic assessment of the common people of London'[282] is also found in his earlier essays, such as 'Edgware Road: A Study in Living',[283] which questions about the particular crisis of London that unjustly dehumanises people due to the post-war unemployment, causing them to lose their vital energy. Symons deplores the stagnant condition of the people in the city because he cannot find any charm or beauty there if the people do not exist as vitally colourful components enjoying their human right in their own ways, creating the hybrid beauty of the metropolitan cityscape. For Symons, monotonous cosmopolitanism cannot be accepted, as he always welcomes diversity of human lives with fluidity of vital energy.

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[281] Ibid., p. 12.
[282] Regenia Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832 -1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 122.
[283] The essay first appeared in *Anglo-American Magazine*, 7(1902), pp. 108-112. Reprinted in Chapter VI of *London: A Book of Aspects* in 1908 with revisions.

> As I walk to and fro in Edgware Road, I cannot help sometimes wondering why these people exist, why take the trouble to go on existing. Watch their faces, and you will see in them listlessness, a hard unconcern, a failure to be interested, which speaks equally in the roving eyes of the man who stands smoking at the curbstone with his hands in his pockets, and in the noisy laugh of the youth leaning against the wall, and in the gray, narrow face of the child whose thin legs are too tired to dance when the barrel-organ plays jigs. Whenever anything happens in streets there is a crowd at once, and this crowd is made up of people who have no pleasures and no interests of their own to attend to, and to whom any variety is welcome in the tedium of their lives.[284]

From these strong tones, which are rare for many of his writings, we can surmise

[284] Symons, *London: A Book of Aspects* (Minneapolis: Edmund D. Brooks, 1908), pp. 50-51.

that Symons considers the view of London in front of him seriously deplorable, and his message must directly appeal to readers in order to retrieve the old, once habitable London, as if he believes this is the task of a flâneur poet in London. If the city loses various human delights, which are essential components for the attractive view of the urban space, he cannot find any more value to describe for his art.

As seen in this chapter, from poems to essays, most of Symons's works on London remain aesthetically impressionistic writing, delivering his subjective impressions with vividness so that readers can share those perspectives with him. Symons's subjective, impressionistic sketches of the urban space would create a certain sympathy with readers, but such a method is not persuasive enough to bring a rapid, significant change among people, different from an ideological speech. In fact, it is highly probable that Symons did not intend such a forceful result from the first as a flâneur poet of London, which is contrastive to Baudelaire, who boldly exhibited his 'strength', an intention to involve readers with his Paris, proudly using the first-person plural 'nous' [we] to start his *Les Fleurs du Mal*, as if willingly trying to remove the hypocritical masks of socially

'good readers' and draw them into his way. Baudelaire isn't interested in making his readers feel comfortable with the strangeness of the city experience, and in his work, even the theme of urban wonderment is less inspiring than deeply troubling.[285] Unlike Baudelaire, Symons does not exhibit such a strong force. He prioritises describing various lives in the fluidity of the urban city, enjoying the aesthetic of the bath of multitude. His stance always remains that of a passionate gazer and presenter, which is an artistic choice of Symons, who sincerely practised his aesthetic to exhibit the colourfully changing aspects of London, the fluidity of diverse human lives coexisting in the metropolitan city.

Symons established his position as an impressionistic poet soon after his debut, and such of his works are doubtlessly successful to attract readers' eyes, aesthetically exhibiting his own cosmopolitanism that prioritises the diversity of human lives, carefully avoiding forceful language. His cosmopolitanism serves as an aesthetically written impressionistic writing that invites readers to his perspective, hoping that someone could share the same view and same value to

[285]Ross Chambers, 'Baudelaire's Paris', *The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire,* ed. by Rosemary Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 105.

appreciate the mobility of diverse human lives. John Tomlinson observes that such an aesthetic cosmopolitanism cannot bring about a big change directly in a short span of time.[286] He considers that 'Urry's argument is persuasive, but he would, I am sure, agree that the patterns he is describing fall somewhat short of the ideal of cosmopolitanism we are considering here'.[287] However, 'despite all such problems, Urry's argument is interesting in its specification of the aesthetic aspect of the cosmopolitan disposition'.[288] 'Cosmopolitan disposition' seems the key phrase applicable to Symons as a cosmopolitan, for he is the poet whose artistic effort to pursue the ideal aesthetic in his works at the same time reveals his cosmopolitanism. Symons practices a less forceful, or in other words, humbler method of cosmopolitanism in his literature in order to cut out attractive views of the world, and the same kind of modest but careful attitude is also displayed by Bhabha. Now we remember the somewhat peculiar avoidance of Symons; although he was largely regarded as 'cosmopolitan' figure by his contemporaries, he never used the term for himself or others. It is interesting that Bhabha is also a

[286] John Tomlinson, 'The Possibility of Cosmopolitanism', *Globalization and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999), p. 201.
[287] Ibid., p. 201.
[288] Ibid., p. 202.

careful cosmopolitan scholar who hesitates to make a decisive use of the term, admitting 'specifying cosmopolitanisms positively and definitely is an uncosmopolitan thing to do'.[289]

Without claiming the term 'cosmopolitan', Symons expected to expand the circle of readers who sympathise with the hybrid cityscape filled with diversity of human lives, just as Symons gazes upon them favourably. Such a humble, aesthetic cosmopolitanism cannot dramatically bring rapid change to the world view, but within a longer span, it will not be powerless. Symons must have recognised the possibility that slower change could be brought about by aesthetic writings, without claiming his ideal as a slogan. As Tomlinson observes, 'modest cosmopolitanism' may be 'a far cry from a heroic ideal of global citizenship, but it does at least seem a disposition to be built upon that is plausibly within our grasp'.[290] The possibility of transforming the world view is surely found in Symons's writings about London, for he was a flâneur poet who could prioritise his own subjectivity as well as that of others, praising the diversity of human lives

[289] Sheldon Pollock, Homi K. Bhabha, Carol A. Breckenridge, and Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'Cosmopolitanisms', *Public Culture* (2000), p. 577.
[290] John Tomlinson, 'The Possibility of Cosmopolitanism', *Globalization and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999), p. 207.

that enlivens a place.

Chapter 3

The Periodical Venture of *The Savoy*：

Cosmopolitan Literary Space towards *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*

This chapter discusses Symons's editorship of *The Savoy* (January 1896 – December 1896) from the viewpoint that this magazine is a crucial example of Symons putting his cosmopolitanism into practice as an editorial policy; furthermore, his experience with the magazine eventually led to or brought forth the publication of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899:1919) as a mature form of cosmopolitan literary intersection. Due to its short publication period, *The Savoy* has long been regarded as a less-important episode in his career, an unfruitful challenge to a young editor in spite of his enthusiasm. In terms of Symons and cosmopolitanism, as seen in chapters 1 and 2, Symons has exhibited his cosmopolitan views in his writings, from his poems to his travel essays. However, most of his writing remains humble impression, as if he is carefully

avoiding forceful persuasion, which also characterizes his stance and aesthetic. In order to grasp his cosmopolitanism further, shedding a new light on his enthusiastic devotion to *The Savoy* is a crucial process: not only for the rehabilitation of the unjustly poor reception of the magazine and his editorship, but also for the re-evaluation of the link between his hitherto-most-ignored work, *The Savoy,* and the most famous, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. Symons was a front-figure from the launch to the end for the magazine, passionate in his desire to offer cosmopolitan literary intersection to the new talents and hoping that the venture would be accepted and gain new readership. Regrettably, Symons's efforts were not rewarded commercially, but it should be noted that Symons exclusively took direct action to the realisation of a literary cosmopolitan space, setting its pages as the stage of lively exchange of various talents without questioning contributors' nationalities, schools, or notoriety. While Symons and the editorial board could not find a last-resort measure to survive the competitive publishing market in the 1890s, every effort and experience Symons had during the publication of *The Savoy* should not be viewed as a failure, because it is essentially a rehearsal for the publication of *The Symbolist Movement in*

Literature. In the evaluation of Symons's international contribution, *The Savoy* and *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* should be viewed as a set, for both of them equally reveal his cosmopolitanism, albeit in different ways. In the process of analysing the editorial policy by Symons and the causes of the sudden ending of the magazine in spite of the editorial board's careful risk-management, it seems *The Savoy* inevitably represents the difficulty of inventing an ideal cosmopolitan space welcomed by everyone, revealing the fragility of such an ambition.

Launch of *The Savoy*

To examine the background of the launch of *The Savoy*, the growth of the Victorian periodical market should be considered as a significant factor that often controlled literary trends. Thanks to the advanced printing and transportation technologies of the time, the periodical market rapidly expanded its readership. Such a circumstance accelerated competition among ambitious publishers seeking wider sales and public attention, which at the same time must have contributed to

the enlivening of the market. It allowed multiple eminent periodicals to appear, periodicals which represented in many ways the atmosphere of the age. Such periodicals were often sumptuously illustrated, and some were categorized 'high journalism,' aiming for a collaboration of literature and art in their aesthetic policies and featuring topical editors. These publications reflect a unique trend in fin-de-siècle England. Of course, together with the aesthetic aim, the visual effect must have been employed as an important marketing strategy, as it could differentiate volumes in the competitive publishing market, appealing to readers' eyes and encouraging them to explore the literary content. Laurel Brake observes the change in the relationship between the growing Victorian print media and readers as consumers, which was surely the beginning of the current mass-media market:

> Text and image, text alongside image, text as image—these are the combinations one is confronted with when one studies nineteenth-century print media and the rise of consumer culture. The Victorians explored and exploited all possible juxtapositions of text and

> image, and were very much aware of the potential power of images in their lives and their media. For them, as for us now, illustrations in all sorts of forms lured potential consumers into buying and reading illustrated periodical texts.[291]

Writing about the proliferation of illustrated literary periodicals published in England in the 1890s, a contemporary critic of Symons, Holbrook Jackson (1874-1948), recalls that 'we remember how numerous were the excellent periodicals issued with fair evidence of success. No previous decade in English history had produced so many distinctive and ambitious publications'.[292] Among them, *The Yellow Book* (April 1894 - April 1897) and *The Savoy* (January - December 1896) are the two representative periodicals of the age, as Jackson observes.

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[291] Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, eds., 'Introduction: The Lure of Illustration', *The Lure of Illustration in the Nineteenth Century: Picture and Press* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) p.12.

[292] Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and Ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (Franklin, Tennessee: Tantallon Press, 2002), p. 40.

> As to what individuals among these writers and painters were the peculiar products of the Eighteen Nineties—that is, those who could not, or might not, have been produced by any other decade—it is not always easy to say. In dealing with the writers the book-lists of John Lane, Elkin Mathews and Leonard Smithers are useful guides in any process of narrowing-down; and further guidance may be found by a perusal of the files of *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy*, for these two publications were the favourite lamps around which the most bizarre moths of the Nineties clustered. There were few essential writers of the Nineties who did not contribute to one or the other, and the very fact that Henry Harland, who edited the former, and Arthur Symons, who edited the latter, were able to gather together so many writers [and] artists who were at once novel and notable, emphasizes the distinction of the artistic activities of the time.[293]

While *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy* share many contributors and have long

[293] Ibid., p. 39-40.

been regarded as representative periodicals of the 'yellow nineties', it is generally considered that the impact of *The Savoy* was minor compared to *The Yellow Book*. As an illustrated literary magazine, *The Yellow Book* left a strong impression on readers, especially with its vividly-contrasting black-and-yellow cover design, which must have functioned as a perfect lure for attracting attention. To stand out among hosts of competitors, and to lure people to the literary content, this magazine succeeded with a simple but eye-catching initial strategy.

However, after gaining such a prominent position among rival periodicals, the magazine had to face a moment of some hardship, caused by a rapid assumption by the 'gossipy' audience. As soon as Oscar Wilde was sentenced at his 1895 trial, the public also rejected the art-editor and illustrator of *The Yellow Book*, Aubrey Beardsley, associating him with Wilde. Beardsley had accepted his job with the magazine on condition that Wilde would not contribute to it: This indicates Beardsley's reluctance to acknowledge any connection with Wilde since their collaboration for the English version of *Salome*. Moreover, when Wilde was arrested, he held a book with a yellow front cover in his hand, and journalists assumed and reported that Wilde had a copy of *The Yellow Book* upon his arrest.

This greatly contributed to the impression of closer connection between Wilde and Beardsley. To avoid being taken down together, the publisher, John Lane, and the literary editor, Henry Harland, agreed to dismiss Beardsley from the magazine because of innumerable complaints from readers. According to W. B. Yeats,[294] there was also a serious complaint from a popular novelist who had great influence among the most conventional sections of the British public and who wrote a letter directly to the publisher demanding Beardsley's dismissal. Yeats observes that 'the moment had come to get rid of unpopular persons'.[295] After Beardsley left *The Yellow Book*, the magazine actually survived until 1897, but it had lost the newsworthiness and lustre it had once enjoyed.

As soon as *The Yellow Book* lost popularity in 1895, an ambitious publisher, Leonard Smithers,[296] regarded as a decadent man who declared his willingness to publish 'anything that the others are afraid of' and, according to Wilde, 'the most

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[294] W.B. Yeats identifies the novelist as Mrs.Humphry Ward in his 'The Trembling of the Veil', *Autobiographies* (New York: Scribner, 1999), p.248.
[295] Ibid., p.248.
[296] Leonard Charles Smithers(1861-1907) solicitor, publisher and antiquarian bookseller. The illustrated book, finely printed and handsomely bound, was a prominent feature of Smithers' publishing career. In his days he was known for primarily for publishing books of upscale erotica, for he had a predilection for French literature and history as well as Gallic pornography. J. G. Nelson, 'Introduction' *Publisher to the decadents: Leonard Smithers in the careers of Beardsley, Wilde, and Dowson* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), p.1-6.

learned erotomaniac in Europe',[297] was planning to launch a new magazine, as he believed that his rival's crisis represented an opening in the market. The magazine, later named *The Savoy* by Beardsley, would surpass *The Yellow Book*. As Fletcher points out, no other man in London at that time, when the reaction against Wilde and Lane's *Yellow Book* had not yet blown over, would have attempted it. Smithers offered Arthur Symons the position of literary editor, and Symons accepted on the condition that Beardsley would be the art editor. Yeats, as a close friend of Symons and a main contributor to *The Savoy*, welcomed this decision:

> 'Aubrey Beardsley had been dismissed from the art-editorship of *The Yellow Book* under circumstances that had made us indignant […] I was already settled there, I imagine, when a publisher called and proposed that Symons should edit a review or magazine, and Symons consented on the condition that Beardsley were Art Editor—and I was delighted at his condition, as I think were all his other contributors. […] We knew that we must face an infuriated Press and public, but being all young we

[297] Regenia Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1897), p.141.

delighted in enemies and in everything that had an heroic air'.[298]

As Yeats mentions here, 'the heroic air' of the younger generations must have pushed then-30-year-old literary editor Symons to move forward with a new literary experiment, rather than becoming intimidated by the difficulties that preceding periodicals had suffered. His 'editorial note' appeared in the first number, which is also a declaration of a new literary direction, and the magazine followed its policy. The view of Fletcher that *The Savoy* was 'a genuinely advanced periodical' compared to *The Yellow Book* is probably not hyperbole, based on a careful comparison of the two.[299]

Reflecting the literary editor Symons's cosmopolitanism, *The Savoy* welcomed various contributors from already-eminent figures as well as from then-unknown writers and young female poets. For the purpose of grasping Symons's cosmopolitanism, together with the analysis of his written works, his editorial policy and reactions taken from *The Savoy* have significant importance,

[298] W.B. Yeats, 'The Trembling of the Veil', *The Collected Works of W.B Yeats Vol. III: Autobiographies* (New York: Scribner, 1999), p.248-249.
[299] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890s,* Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer, eds. (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p.195.

as they inevitably and directly reveal the form in which his cosmopolitanism was to be realised on its pages.

As Tanya Agathocleous observes, 'cosmopolitan thought was a notable feature of intellectual life' in fin-de-siècle England, as seen in the emergence of journals such as *Cosmopolis* (1896-1898), *The Review of Reviews* (1890 -1936), and *The Savoy* (1896) that practiced various forms of Cosmopolitanism.[300] *Cosmopolis* offered its pages in various European languages (English, French, German), each language divided into a section. *The Review of Reviews* 'showcased an imperialist cosmopolitanism', reprinting reviews in English from all over the world, as it hoped to create a global union of 'English-speaking folk' who might help to 'save the English empire'.[301] Compared to these self-identified 'cosmopolitan' magazines, *The Savoy* exhibits unique 'cosmopolitanism' without directly manifesting the term as ideology, exhibiting quite typically Symonsian humility. As Symons clearly states in the editorial note for the first issue, the editorial policy created an international space of literary exchange in its pages, as if the

[300] Tanya Agathocleous, 'The realist spectator and the romance plot: James, Doyle, and the aesthetics of fin-de-siecle cosmopolitanism', *Urban Realism and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in the Nineteenth Century: Visible City, Invisible World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.117.
[301] Ibid., p.118.

'cosmopolitan right to visit was realised there. Freed from any bondage of schools, name-values, or nationalities, *The Savoy* juxtaposed various articles with various backgrounds without dividing them into national sections, as did *Cosmopolis*. Such explicit hybridity is the key factor that also characterises the cosmopolitanism in Symons, which he later delineated in the contents of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*.

Embark on the New Periodical Venture

Symons recalls that he visited Aubrey Beardsley to ask him to be the art editor for Leonard Smither's new quarterly publication in the summer of 1895.[302] Symons describes Beardsley's appearance in detail—he was so ill, lying out on a couch, 'horribly white', that Symons wondered 'if I had come too late'. According to Symons, it was then that Beardsley suggested the name 'Savoy' for the periodical. As Beckson observes, it was a 'rather daring title since some of the damaging

[302] Arthur Symons, *Aubrey Beardsley* (London: John Baker Publishers Ltd., 1966), p.7.

testimony against Wilde was associated with the hotel of that name',[303] but it was finally adopted after 'endless changes and uncertainties'.[304]

The preparation phase of *The Savoy* was already international: Dieppe, France was the location of the editorial meetings for the launch for the first issue. Dieppe was a favourite seaside resort for younger artists and poets, and many of the contributors to *The Savoy* gathered there. Fletcher considers *The Savoy* as an essentially Anglo-French enterprise, planned in Dieppe: for, in the late summer of 1895, England was no place to organise an 'advanced' periodical.[305]

Symons and his friends—including the painter Charles Conder and the poet Ernest Dowson—frequented the Café des Tribunaux. Beardsley joined the circle in August, and Symons and Beardsley saw each other daily for a month. 'It was at Dieppe that *The Savoy* was really planned, and it was in the café, which Sickert[306] has so often painted, that I wrote the slightly pettish and defiant "Editorial Note", which made so many enemies for the first number'.[307] After indulging in a

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[303] Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p.121.
[304] Ibid., p.7.
[305] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890's* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1979), p. 196.
[306] Walter Sickert (1860-1942), an English impressionist painter, who worked as an assistant to James McNeill Whistler.
[307] Symons, *Aubrey Beardsley*, p.7.

summer seaside holiday, Symons set to work in September, energetically preparing for the new magazine. The stay in Dieppe also soothed his heartbreak after his separation from his then-lover, Lydia, a music-hall dancer who had decided to marry a wealthy older man on her mother's advice. However, Symons's absorption with the new periodical project was surprising.[308] In October, Symons returned to London and energetically worked to recruit contributors, but everything did not go as planned. For example, Thomas Hardy, who once had responded that he was willing to have his name listed in the prospectus, refused any contribution because he disliked the title of the quarterly. By then, Beardsley had prepared some illustrations for the magazine, including one (fig. i) for the prospectus announcing the release of the first issue in December 1895. However, Smithers did not like it, as he considered the Pierrot 'inappropriate, perhaps too daintily French for British audience'.[309] Beardsley drew another version (fig. ii), of 'a robust winged figure of John Bull entering the

[308] Beckson sees it the turbulence following the break-up with Lydia probably provided added impetus. Beckson, *Arthur Symon*s: *A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p.123.
[309] Ibid., p.123.

stage holding huge pens and an announcement'.[310] It was already late in November when George Moore noticed that the 'John Bull' in the drawing appeared to have 'an obscene swelling in his breeches'.[311] Thus, some of the prospective contributors, including Shaw and Selwyn Image, had to gather immediately to consider what action should be taken to deal with Beardsley's impish indiscretion. The situation must have been extremely serious, since the first edition was scheduled to go on sale in December; Beardsley had inscribed his illustrations with 'Prospectus for the number 1, December 1895' (fig. i and ii), and 80,000 copies of the prospectus with the 'obscene' John Bull had already been circulated. There must have been a dispute between the publisher, Smithers, who was delighted by Beardsley's impudence,[312] and the contributors, who demanded that Smithers immediately withdraw the illustration, or at least modify the part that Shaw had pointed out as being obscene. However, it was too late to take protective action, since the prospectus had already been widely distributed. In fact, the delay in releasing the first edition of *The Savoy* affected total sales, and it

[310] Ibid., p.123.
[311] Ibid., p.123.
[312] Ibid., p.123.

actually missed what would have been its best-timed release date, losing a seasonal sales opportunity. Since the first edition had initially been scheduled to appear in December, Smithers sought to promote the book as a Christmas gift and asked Beardsley to draw an illustration with a seasonal theme to be included in the issue as a Christmas card. Beardsley designed a religious and seasonal motif, the Madonna sitting with her child (fig. iii), without exhibiting obviously diabolic mischief in the design – quite a rarity for him. The card was included in the first edition, which was published in January 1896.

In January 1896, the first edition of *The Savoy* and the eighth volume of *The Yellow Book* appeared, the latter consisting of 406 pages, the weightiest volume to date, and possibly an attempt by Harland to outweigh the new rival.[313] The first edition of *The Savoy* was priced at 2/6, and it contained 170 spacious pages with wide margins and eye-pleasing type, all amply spaced. This reflects Symons's influence, as he was particular about 'desirable harmony between the inner meaning and the outer form of a book'.[314] Nelson observes that this

[313] Karl Beckson, *Henry Harland: his life and work* (London: The Eighteen Nineties Society, 1978), pp.88-89.
[314] Symons, 'Books, Bindings and A Titan' *Studies on Modern Painters* (New York: Books for Libraries Press, Inc., 1925), p.67.

'characteristically margin-size format' must have shown Beardsley's work to much greater advantage than the smaller size and shape of *The Yellow Book.*[315]

However, in spite of the rich appearance of the volume, the price of *The Savoy* was surprisingly affordable: 2/6 was less than half of the 5-shilling cost of *The Yellow Book*. Details of the discussions on pricing policy are unknown, but it is probable that the three main figures behind the magazine were inconsistent in terms of marketing strategy and policies—as Brake surmises, Symons and Beardsley would probably define *The Savoy* as an artistic project, with Smithers defining it as a commercial one.[316] Identifying themselves as belonging to the art press, they positioned themselves in contradistinction to the alleged 'vulgarity' (and frequencies) of the burgeoning popular press of the day.[317] This must have presented a dilemma.

Another notable difference between *The Savoy* and *The Yellow Book* is that the former did not contain commercial advertisements until the last edition was issued.

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[315] Nelson, *Publisher to the Decadents: Leonard Smithers in the Careers of Beardsley, Wilde, Dowson* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2000), p.67.
[316] Laurel Brake, *Print in Transition 1850-1910: Studies in Media and Book History*, (New York: Palgrave 2001), p.175.
[317] Laurel Brake, *Print in Transition 1850-1910: Studies in Media and Book History*, (New York: Palgrave 2001), p.171.

This was a surprisingly rare feature, particularly as it was aiming for commercial success—even the precedent artistic literary magazine, *The Yellow Book*, contained a list of advertisements that was large, indexed, and bound in at the back.[318] Considering these aspects, *The Savoy*'s rejection of advertising was a fairly dangerous decision given the competitive market. However, at the same time, these refusals to compromise in the name of easy profit reveal how strictly Symons persisted to his artistic aim for the creation of the new magazine as a perfect embodiment of his ideal.

After the unexpected delays in releasing the first edition, surely caused by Beardsley's mischievous parody, the front cover for the January 1896 edition (fig. iv) was 'vastly different from the leering masked women on the first cover of the *Yellow Book*, [and] revealed a conscious attempt on the part of illustrator, editor, and publisher to avoid charges of sensationalism'.[319] However, upon closer examination, the cover shows a chubby Cupid about to urinate on a copy of Lane's magazine, *The Yellow Book*.[320] Fully understanding that *The Savoy* was a

[318] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890's* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1979), p. 194.
[319] Beckson, *Arthur Symons*: *A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p.127.
[320] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the*

rival to *The Yellow Book*, Beardsley fulfilled his role to provoke bored audiences by providing a spectacle they expected to see. Beardsley was an artist who recognised people's insatiable desire for gossipy voyeurism—still prevalent today—so, at this point, he must have enjoyed the fact that his art was considered 'shocking'.

The Openness of Cosmopolitan Hospitality

Symons's 'Editorial Note' is enormously important for gaining a deeper understanding of his aim to realise the literary cosmopolitan space in *The Savoy*. On the first page of the first edition, Symons describes his editorial policy:

> It is hoped that "The Savoy" will be a periodical of an exclusively literary and artistic kind. To present Literature in the shape of its letter-press, Art in the form of its illustrations, will be its aim. For the

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1890's (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1979), p. 194.

> attainment of that aim we can but rely on our best endeavours and on the logic of our belief that good writers and artists will care to see their work in company with the work of good writers and artists. Readers who look to a new periodical for only very well-known or only very obscure names must permit themselves to be disappointed. We have no objection to a celebrity who deserves to be celebrated, or to an unknown person who has not been seen often enough to be recognised in passing.[321]

The passionate tone proves that Symons's readiness to take a chance stems not just from a childish rivalry with *The Yellow Book* but from sincere desire to give readers and contributors a completely new magazine. As a responsible editor seeking to fulfil his mission to make the magazine successful, he had to prepare for every possible occasion, carefully learning from past examples. Considering this, Symons's announcement seems quite sensible from the viewpoint of risk-management. To avoid the predictable adverse effects of associating *The*

[321] Arthur Symons, 'Editorial Note', *The Savoy*, No.1 (January 1896)

Savoy with the Wilde scandal that *The Yellow Book* had suffered, Symons clearly states his editorial stance:

> All we ask from our contributors is good work, and good work is all we offer our readers. This we offer with some confidence. We have no formulas, and we desire no false unity of form or matter. We have not invented a new point of view. We are not Realists, or Romanticists, or Decadents. For us, all art is good which is good art. We hope to appeal to the tastes of the intelligent by not being original for originality's sake, or audacious for the sake of advertisement, or timid for the convenience of the elderly-minded. We intend to print no verse which has not some close relationship with poetry, no criticism which has not some knowledge, discernment, and sincerity in its judgement. We could scarcely say more, and we are content to think we can scarcely say less.[322]

[322] Symons, 'Editorial Note', *The Savoy*, No.1 (January 1896)

As proof of this policy, *The Savoy* welcomed contributors from England and also from other continents. Apart from the risk-management aspect, this long editorial note clearly explains how literary cosmopolitanism can be realised in its pages, following the Diogenesian 'cosmopolitan right to visit', welcomed by 'cosmopolitan hospitality'. The richness and the variety of the literary content prove that Symons challenged the very concept of a periodical at the height of his career as a central figure of London's literary circle. As Kenneth Clark observes, Symons probably had a 'keener eye for quality and intelligence than Henry Harland, so 'the literary side is excellent',[323] but his 'opennness' to others is also the key factor that gathered various international talents and allowed them to coexist in the pages of *The Savoy.*

As Beckson notes, the first issue (and the second one) reveal that Symons, with his ability to obtain contributions from the leading symbolists and decadents in both France and Britain, was a brilliant editor who made *The Savoy* the first truly British avant-garde publication of the 1890s.[324] Symons's defensive preface, 'all

[323] Kenneth Clark, 'Introduction', *The Best of Aubrey Beardsley* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1978), p.38–39.
[324] Karl Beckson, *Henry Harland: his life and work* (London: The Eighteen Nineties Society, 1978), p.88.

art is good art' regardless of school, might be understood as Fletcher interprets it: 'no originality for originality's sake'.[325]

Thanks to the openness of *The Savoy*, as seen in its literary content, talented international contributors and works from America, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, and India created a lively, cosmopolitan literary exchange in its pages. The magazine appeared to foresee the introduction of a new literary movement—including French symbolism to England—that later influenced many American modernist writers. Kermode regards Symons as a crucial figure in twentieth-century literature.[326] Symons's literary foresight as a mediator of *fin-de-siècle* and modernism is already visible in his editorship of the magazine, and it later flourished in his literary criticism. However, still, as Munro observes, it was difficult for *The Savoy* to completely escape the public's persistent assumption that the magazine was simply a new haven for the decadents. Although the general tone might have seemed superficially decadent, as many of the so-called decadent poets moved from *The Yellow Book* to *The Savoy*, it is true

[325] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890's,* eds. by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p. 197.
[326] Frank Kermode, 'Arthur Symons', *Romantic Image*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002),p.127.

that literary contributors such as W.B. Yeats, Joseph Conrad, and George Bernard Shaw helped to give *The Savoy* a more wholesome appearance. Similarly, although Beardsley left his stamp most heavily on the art of the magazine, contributions from Phil May, Joseph Pennell, and William Rothenstein offset the Beardsley effect. On the whole, the first issue contained little that could have offended the English readership of the time, thanks to the careful, repeating editorial meetings to avoid possible risks, and it was fairly well received. On the first issue, *Punch* was heavily satirical, suggesting that *The Savoy* 'should be on every school room table, every mother should present it to her daughter, for it is bound to have an ennobling and purifying influence'.[327] Even *The Athenaeum*[328] grudgingly admitted that, although it was apparently an 'offshoot of *The Yellow Book*, and although many of the contributors are the same, it is free from some of the offences of the older periodical'.[329]

The extreme openness of the content of *The Savoy* allowed it to function as a lively space for international literary interchanges; it was not a whimsical,

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[327] Anon., *Punch* (February 1, 1896), p. 49.
[328] *The Athenaeum* (January 28, 1896), p.117.
[329] John M. Munro, *Arthur Symons* (New York: Twayne Publishers Inc., 1969), pp.48–49.

temporal tendency, at least not for Symons himself. It is interesting that, a year or so after issuing the 'editorial note', Symons was even more specific in his rejection of narrow aesthetic points of view. In his prefatory letter to George Moore,[330] Symons writes:

> Frankly, I do not understand this limiting of oneself to a school, a doctrine, a costume. I have, and I keep for myself, my own way of seeing things, my own way of trying to say them; you have your own vision of the world, and your own technique. But to you, as to me, whatever has been beautifully wrought, by whatever craftsman, and in whatever manner of working, if only he has been true to himself, to his own way of realizing the things he sees, that, to you as to me, is a work of art.[331]

Symons's reluctance to belong to a specific school is obvious here. Symons

[330] James G. Nelson, *The Early Nineties: A View from the Bodley Head* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 152.
[331] Arthur Symons, *Studies in Two Literatures* (London: Leonard Smithers, 1897), p.vii.

quickly caught new trends, welcoming contemporary influences, including many from overseas. This often makes tracing the shift in Symons's literary stance difficult. Tom Gibbons classifies it into three phases based on the changes in Symons's literary criticisms:

> When we read Symons's criticism in the order in which it appeared in periodicals, it becomes clear that between 1885 and 1908 it went through three main stages of development. Although each stage evolved gradually from the one before, we can conveniently distinguish an impressionist phase ending about 1893, a symbolist phase ending about 1900, and an expressionist phase ending in 1908. [332]

It is interesting to note that the period between 1893 and 1908 coincides with when Symons devoted his energy to prepare *The Savoy* and to his highest achievement of literary criticism, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1st ed.

[332] Tom Gibbons, *Rooms in the Darwin Hotel: Studies in English Literary Criticism and Ideas 1880-1920* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1973), p.69.

1899; 2nd ed. 1908). The rich line-up of international contributors to *The Savoy* proves that Symons as a literary editor already exercised his capability as a mediator of the new literary movement in England. At least, it is true that Symons was greatly influenced by literary contributors to *The Savoy* through his editorship of the magazine, most intensively when numbers one and two were issued, which must have contributed to developing his literary antenna, and which subsequently led to the publication of his anthology of literary criticism in 1899.

Between Commercial Profit and Aesthetic Ideal; The Struggle for Survival

In number two of *The Savoy*, published April 1896, Smithers announced that, from July onwards, the magazine would appear monthly. As a literary editor, Symons also describes the new start of *The Savoy* as a monthly magazine in the 'Editorial Note' of the first monthly issue, number three, in July 1896:

> A new volume of 'The Savoy' commences with the July number, and it

> has been decided, in consequence of the interest which has been taken in the two numbers already issued, to make the magazine a monthly instead of a Quarterly. The policy of 'The Savoy' will remain precisely what it has hitherto been, but the opportunities of monthly publication will permit of the issue of a serial, and arrangements are being made with Mr. George Moore for the serial publication of his new novel, 'Evelyn Innes'. It is not unreasonably assumed that those who have welcomed 'The Savoy' as a Quarterly will welcome it with at least equal interest as a Monthly, and it is confidently hoped that the large public, to which a Quarterly comes with too occasional an appeal, will appreciate the monthly publication of a Periodical whose only aim is to offer its readers letterpress, which is literature, and illustrations which are art.[333]

From this explanation, readers might have not been able to detect the financial condition the publisher then suffered, or at least, it might not seem problematic, as

[333] Symons, 'Editorial Note', *The Savoy* Number Three (July 1896)

it states that this change is mainly because of readers' demand to read serial novels in a more frequent cycle—but it is highly probable that the decision was aimed at more effective profit, because Smithers faced a growing financial crisis. Ironically, in spite of the change, the sales began to drop after the third number in July, when *The Savoy* began to appear monthly. By September, Smithers decided to end the periodical with the December issue.[334]

One of the main contributors to the magazine, Ernest Dowson, whose livelihood totally relied on payment from Smithers, retained an optimistic view in a letter dated 25 May 1896 to Smithers.

> 'In its monthly shape will the 'Savoy' take chronicle notice of literary events. […] I hope it will succeed as well in its monthly aspect as I presume it has as a quarterly. May the hair of John Lane grow green with envy!'[335]

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[334] Karl Beckson, 'Achievement and Dissipation: 1890-6', *Arthur Symons: Selected Letters 1880-1935* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), p.59.
[335] Ernest Dowson, *The Letters of Ernest Christopher Dowson*, eds. by Desmond Flower and Henry Maas (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1975), p.363.

Contrary to Dowson's optimistic expectation regarding the future of the 'monthly' appearance of *The Savoy*, its sales gradually declined, and Smithers' financial status was also considerably deteriorated. In spite of his serious financial condition, Smithers continued to pay his contributors. Beardsley and Dowson most desperately needed the help of *The Savoy*, as they were both out of work and ill. Others were also in serious trouble, too. An example was the young Yeats, who, in 1895, was in the throes of serious financial difficulties that made difficult his ability to establish his independence from his father and to pursue his burgeoning romance with Olivia Shakespear.[336] As in the case of Yeats, the incomes—often non-existent—of many of those young writers fortunate enough to contribute substantially to *The Savoy* were increased as the publisher paid his writers and artists at rates considerably above those paid by other periodicals of the day. According to Joseph Conrad, whose story 'The Idiots' appeared in the sixth number of the *Savoy* (the article had been refused by *Cosmopolis*), Smithers paid two guineas per four-hundred word page, while the popular *Fortnightly*

[336] James G. Nelson, *Publisher to the Decadents: Leonard Smithers in the careers of Beardsley, Wilde, Dowson* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), p.59.

Review offered its contributors the paltry sum of one guinea per one thousand words. That Smithers was so generous in his payments to his poets is unlikely, since the rate paid for verse in the nineties was shockingly small. The popular *Saturday Review*, for instance, paid as little as two pounds a poem.[337]

While Smithers was generally regarded as a mysterious, rather 'eccentric' figure, so much so that William Rothenstein and W.B. Yeats wanted to keep their distance from him, especially in private life, it is also remembered that Smithers was the person Aubrey Beardsley trusted until his death. On his deathbed at the Hôtel Cosmopolitain in Menton, France, Beardsley communicated his final request to Smithers:

> Dear Friend,
>
> I implore you to destroy all copies of Lysistrata and bad drawings.
>
> Show this to Pollitt and conjure him to do same. By all that is holy all obscene drawings.

[337]Ibid., p.60.

In my death agony. Aubrey Beardsley

(The envelope is addressed by Ellen Beardsley)[338]

Before judging Smithers simply as an eccentric figure who lacked the management skills to run even a small publishing business, it might be meaningful to consider that he could attract such a distinctive or perverse artist as Beardsley.

The future of *The Savoy* gradually became more and more uncertain even during the issuance of the third number, but the contents were still rich, with many and various contributors.[339] However, compared to the content when it was a quarterly, the number of contributors was, in fact, somewhat decreased; however, the line-up of the contents still exhibited its strength. Not only did it offer original works of representative poets of the age (mainly members of the Rhymer's club, including Symons[340]), but also criticisms such as Havelock Ellis's introductory

[338] Aubrey Beardsley, 'To Leonard Smithers', [Postmark 7 March 1898], *The Letters of Aubrey Beardsley*, eds. by Henry Maas and Others (Oxford: PlantinPublishers, 1970), p.439.
[339] For the literary contents of each issue of *The Savoy*, see appendix II.
[340] Symons joined the Rhymers' Club in 1890. For details, Alfred Normans' *The Rhymers' Club: Poets of the Tragic Generation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996) is a helpful guide to the background of its foundation.

essay on Friedrich Nietzsche, which was the earliest offered to British readers, or the debut poem of the then 17-year-old Indian poet, Sarojini Naidu. The 'monthly' periodical, *The Savoy*, still retained a power to introduce then-unknown literary talents or new ideas to the public, and energetically so, even as its end quietly approached.

Female Writers of *The Savoy*

As seen in the literary contents from the first number, *The Savoy* also welcomed female writers, just as *the Yellow Book* did. In regard to the magazine, as Fletcher observes, the proprietor John Lane was 'particularly hospitable to women writers and there was an increasing sect of educated and questioning women to write for and read the new venture'.[341] This was also true of the various women poets whose works appeared in the pages of *The Savoy*. Nelson observes that five

[341] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890's*, eds. by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (London: Edward Arnold, 1978), p.194.

women contributors,[342] including Clara Savile Clark (a new writer who also contributed the story 'Elsa'), Edith M Thomas, Olivia Shakespear (Yeats's paramour at the time), Mathilde Blind, and Leila Macdonald, all revealed in their verse a pleasing lyricism and careful artistry characteristic of many of the women poets of the nineties, but none exhibited either the decadent subject matter of Dowson or the Symbolist technique of Yeats.[343] Brake, on the other hand, regards *The Savoy* as a male-dominated, misogynistic literary space:

> One significant difference between *The Yellow Book* and *The Savoy* lies in the latter's exclusion of women, not merely from its readership, but from its editorial staff […] women appear in *The Savoy* exclusively as authors of poems, with the single exception of Olivia Shakespear […] *The Savoy* is an aggressively male and heterosexual magazine, full of male discourse, masculine constructions of women, and misogyny, bristling (if that is the word) with erotic drawings, and clearly (and

[342] It seems Nelson does not count the Indian female poet, Sarojini here; in fact, female contributors for the magazine are six in total.
[343] James G. Nelson, *Publisher to the Decadents: Leonard Smithers in the careers of Beardsley, Wilde, Dowson* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), pp. 74-75.

exclusively) aimed at male readers.[344]

After re-counting the total numbers of female contributors compared to that of male contributors, it seems *The Savoy* may not have been the best place for female writers – but, at the same time, it did not exclude them. Symons actually supported the publication of some of their works even after *The Savoy* ended. For instance, he found the young talent Sarojini Naidu, who was then studying at King's College London and later became the first female president of Indian National Congress. Symons helped her publish her first book, titled *The Golden Threshold* (1905), and wrote an introduction. In a letter, Naidu expresses her appreciation for his help: 'Your letter made me very proud and very sad […] is it possible that I have written verses that are "filled with beauty", and is it possible that you really think them worthy of being given to the world? You know how high my ideal of Art is; and to me my poor casual little poems seem to be less than beautiful —I mean with that final enduring beauty that I desire'.[345] She

[344] Laurel Brake, 'The Savoy: *Gender in Crisis*?', *Subjugated Knowledges: Journalism, Gender & Literature in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1994), pp.150-151.
[345] Sarojini Naidu, *The Golden Threshold* (London: William Heinemann, 1916),

continues in another letter: 'I am not a poet really. I have the vision and the desire, but not the voice. If I could write just one poem full of beauty and the spirit of greatness, I should be exultantly silent forever; but I sing just as the birds do, and my songs are as ephemeral'. 'For this bird-like quality of song', Symons states, 'they are to be valued'.[346] Moreover, Symons helped to publish an anthology of poems by Mathilde Blind,[347] also writing an introduction for her emphasising the sensual features of her poetry, which reflect his personal preference and subjective interpretation. However, as he clearly states on the cover page of her anthology 'selection by Arthur Symons', he does not have to control his subjective choice because he is an impressionistic critic who prioritises his own subjectivity.

The Demise of *The Savoy*

The size of each issue became thinner and thinner once Smithers decided to

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pp. 9-10.

[346] Arthur Symons, 'Introduction', *The Golden Threshold* by Sarojini Naidu (London: William Heinemann, 1916), p. 10.

[347] Symons, ed., *A selection from the poems of Mathilde Blind* by Mathilde Blind, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1897)

transition to a monthly format. While it had aimed to surpass the rival periodical *The Yellow Book*, *The Savoy* faced its ending in the span of one year, only publishing eight issues in total. As seen in the literary content of the seventh and final issue, number eight, the number of contributors had decreased to half of those in the first issue, and it featured works written only by the two editors, Symons and Beardsley. From the first issue onward, Beardsley's health had removed him from contributing, but he returned to supply all the illustrations, while Symons supplied all the letterpress, for the final issue of December 1896.[348] As announced in the 'Publisher's Note' in the second issue, Beardsley's health had rapidly deteriorated, so much so that he was unable to finish one of his full-page drawings for Chapter IV of *Under the Hill*. Since *The Savoy* was the only place where Beardsley's lifelong wish to contribute as a literary writer came true, he must have wanted to devote himself to this periodical. Symons recalls Beardsley's insistence on his occupation as a 'man of letters':

[348] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890's*, eds. by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p. 200.

> I think Beardsley would rather have been a great writer than a great artist; and I remember, on one occasion, when he had to fill up a form of admission to some to which I was introducing himself as 'man of letters'.[349]

It is interesting that, while Beardsley had already established his position in the publishing market as an illustrator, he could not give up his aspiration to be a writer. In *The Savoy*, Beardsley was given the chance to publish his literary pieces for the first time and the last, because his request to translate *Salome* into English had already been refused by Wilde. As seen in the contents of *The Savoy*, the art editor Aubrey Beardsley contributes in various literary pages as well, as if he understood that *The Savoy* was only his chance to leave his literary mark. It is surprising that, while his illness was serious even when the first issue of *The Savoy* appeared, his literary contributions ranged from poems and fiction to translations from Latin. Among his literary works, *Under the Hill*, a story of Venus and Tannhauser, is possibly the most scandalous due to its pornographic

[349] Arthur Symons, *Aubrey Beardsley* (London: John Baker Publishers, 1966), p. 9.

descriptions and intentional ignorance of a proper plot. Macfall reports Beardsley's absorption with the writing of this novel during his stay at Dieppe during the autumn in 1895:

> There found Beardsley immersed in his work for *The Savoy*: but now more concerned with literary aspirations than with drawing. He was hard at work upon his obscene novel *Venus and Tannhauser*, the so-called *Under the Hill*, and was keenly interested in verse, carrying the inevitable portfolio about with him under his arm wherever he went and scribbling phrases as they came to him […] *Under the Hill* was published in mutilated form in the coming *Savoy*, and afterwards in book form; and such it baffles the wits to understand how it could have found a publisher, and how Arthur Symons could have permitted this futile mutilated thing—if indeed he had any say in it, which is unthinkable. It is fantastic drivel, without cohesion, without sense, devoid of art as meaning—a sheer laboured stupidity, revealing

nothing—a posset, a poultice of affectations.[350]

As Macfall wondered how Symons the literary editor could have permitted it, it must be a quite natural reaction to face such a 'pornographic' description for an artistic magazine, just as W. B. Yeats worried about a possible negative influence on the future of *The Savoy*. It is surmised that Symons simply followed his editorial policy sincerely until its last issue, as he admitted certain 'art' to be appreciated in Beardsley's literary works apart from the discussion of morality. After Beardsley's death, Symons actually commented on this novel, 'a new version, a parody (like Laforgue's parodies, but how unlike them, or anything!) of the story of Venus and Tannhauser.[351]

However, the main, fatal cause that brought *The Savoy* to its too-early, abrupt ending was not the work of Beardsley. As Yeats later writes, it was an illustration by William Blake (fig. v), attached to Yeats's text that gave cause for concern.

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[350] Haldane Macfall, *Aubrey Beardsley: The Man and His Work* (London: John Lane The Bodley Head limited, 1928), pp. 78-79.
[351] Arthur Symons, *Aubrey Beardsley* (London: John Baker Publishers, 1966), p. 9.

> We might have survived but for our association with Beardsley; perhaps but for his Under the Hill, a Rabelaisian fragment promising a literary genius as great maybe as his artistic genius; and for the refusal of the bookseller who controlled the railway bookstalls to display our wares. The bookseller's manager, no doubt looking for a design of Beardsley's, pitched upon Blake's *Antaeus setting Virgil and Dante upon the verge of Cocytus* as the ground of refusal, and when Arthur Symons pointed out that Blake was considered 'a very spiritual artist', replied, 'O, Mr. Symons, you must remember that we have an audience of young ladies as well as audience of agnostics'. However, he called Arthur Symons back from the door to say, 'If contrary to our expectations the *Savoy* should have a large sale, we should be very glad to see you again'.[352]

In 'A Literary Causerie: By Way of Epilogue' in the last issue, published in December 1896, Symons reflects on his sincere attempt to serve as an editor for the periodical, tracing its short history and the cause of its marketing failure:

[352] W. B. Yeats, 'The Trembling of the Veil', *The Collected Works of W. B. Yeats Vol. III: Autobiographies* (New York: Scribner, 1999), p. 249.

> For these failures I blame partly myself, partly circumstances. It is not given to anyone in this world to achieve anything entirely to his satisfaction; or only to those who aim low. I aimed high. [...] Our first mistake was in giving so much for so little money; our second, in abandoning a quarterly for a monthly issue. The action of Messrs. Smith and Son in refusing to place 'The Savoy' on their bookstalls, on account of reproduction of a drawing by Blake, was another misfortune. And then, worst of all, we assumed that there were very many people in the world who really cared for art, and really for art's sake.[353]

As *The Savoy* could not avoid its termination, it is clear that unexpected obstacles and fatal triggers were everywhere, just as in modern publishing endeavours. Symons mentions a possibility for the next challenge:

> I have the pleasure to announce that in our next venture we are going to

[353] Arthur Symons, 'A Literary Causerie: By Way of Epilogue', *The Savoy*, No. 8 (London : Leonard Smithers, December 1896), pp. 91-92.

> make no attempt to be popular. We shall make our appearance twice only in the year; our volumes will be larger in size, better produced, and they will cost more. In this way we shall be able to appeal to that limited public which cares for the things we care for; which cares for art, really for art's sake. We shall hope for no big success; we shall be confident of enough support to enable us to go on doing what seems to us worth doing. And, relieved as we shall be from the hurry of monthly publication, we shall have the leisure to do what seems to us worth doing, more nearly as it seems to us it should be done.[354]

He enumerates every thinkable solution to avoid repeating the same mistakes in the future, but it reads painfully; his words are not as positive and enthusiastic as they had been when he launched *The Savoy* only a year before. Symons reveals here, in this 'Literary Causerie', that he still could not accept the reality that *The Savoy* had failed commercially. Being fully careful about the hardships the rival magazine *The Yellow Book* experienced, Symons could not hide his

[354] Ibid,. p. 92.

embarrassment at facing the unexpected, rather abrupt demise. Symons's enumeration of every thinkable cause for the failure in the last number seems as if he was trying to persuade himself that he could have avoided the misfortune. The news of the ending of *The Savoy* was extensively reported; *The Academy* exhibits the hypocritical aspect of mass media in its reviews of *The Savoy* from its launch to the end; it firstly shows careful scepticism that 'the new quarterly, called *the Savoy*, is anything but a repetition of an old enterprise' (January 18, 1896: No. 1237), but, in March, it favourably starts its review by stating that, 'The new number of *the Savoy* is printed admirably by the Chiswick Press', concluding it 'as a whole, has great character. *The Savoy* has caught on' (May 16, 1896: No. 1254). On the last issue of *The Savoy*, although the reviewer shows sympathy concerning the refusal of Messrs. Smith and Co. to place *The Savoy* on their bookstalls as 'disheartening', it writes, 'Looking back on *The Savoy*, we cannot consider it a very remarkable literary or artistic feat' (December 26, 1896: No. 1286).

Needless to say, the refusal of the large bookseller W.H. Smith to sell copies of *The Savoy* must have been fatal; once the route of retailing its products was closed,

customers could not access them, in spite of the product's quality. Brake analyses the possible reasons for the failure of *The Savoy* as follows: 'if Symons was ironically complicit with Smithers' attempt to address "the larger number of people" as readers in No.2, by No.8 his scepticism of the New Journalism project has overtaken him: the low price, the increase of frequency from quarterly to monthly (with its promise of serialized fiction), and the *outré* copy were all mistakes. But most significantly, the belief in the compatibility of a popular audience and high quality was misplaced'.[355] Symons noted this reason later: 'we shall be able to appeal to that limited public which cares for the things we care for; which cares for art, really for art's sake'.[356] Gagnier points out that *The Savoy* failed largely because 'its management rejected advertising',[357] and Alford observes that *The Savoy* could not have been well received owing to 'almost "national" hostility to the Decadents which the trial of Wilde had brought to a head'.[358] However, Jackson introduces another view: 'the Eighteen Nineties,

[355] Laurel Brake, *Print in Transition 1850-1910: Studies in Media and Book History*, (New York: Palgrave 2001), p.174.
[356] Symons, 'A Literary Causerie: By Way of Epilogue', *The Savoy*, No.8 (London : Leonard Smithers, December 1896), p.92.
[357] Regenia Gagnier, *Idylls of the Marketplace: Oscar Wilde and the Victorian Public* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1987), p. 55.
[358] Norman Alford, *The Rhymers' Club: Poets of the Tragic Generation* (New

were not entirely decadent and hopeless; and even their decadence was often decadence only in name, for much of the genius denounced by Max Nordau as degeneration was a sane and healthy expression of a vitality which, as it is not difficult to show, would have been better named regeneration'.[359]As Symons reveals his confusion towards facing such an unacceptable ending of *The Savoy* in spite of his endeavours, he cannot persuade himself to view the result as reality. Finally, the failure itself seems to indicate how difficult it is to truly create a cosmopolitan space in which everyone is welcomed, borderless. Symons was passionately persistent in protecting his editorial policy for the realization of genuinely artistic literary magazine that embodies cosmopolitan openness, but, in management, it seems that he forgot that sense of 'tolerance' or 'compromise' to others who insisted on other views. An example of this might be his refusal of Smithers' suggestion for commercial advertisement. If Symons could have been able to compromise to some extent in order to make *The Savoy* more profitable, it would likely have survived longer. This is ironic; because the harder Symons

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York: St. Martin's Press,1996), p.71.

[359] Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties: A Review of Art and ideas at the Close of the Nineteenth Century* (Franklin, Tennessee: Tantallon Press, 2002), p. 23.

devoted himself to realizing cosmopolitan openness in the form of new magazine with genuinely artistic passion, the more intolerant of alternate he became. The traumatic end of *The Savoy* may partly have been a result of Symons's intolerance against commercialism.

Symons and Yeats: from *The Savoy* to *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*

While *The Savoy* had to cease its publication, every effort for its survival gave Symons a great deal of experience, which eventually blossomed in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. In the background of Symons's literary shift during his editorship for *The Savoy* was W.B. Yeats. They were close friends, especially since Yeats had moved into the rooms next to Symons's at Fountain Court, at the Temple in London.

> Hitherto when in London I had stayed with my family in Bedford Park, but now I was to live for some twelve months in chambers in the

> Temple that opened through a little passage into those of Arthur Symons. If anybody rang at either door, one or other would look through a window in the connecting passage, and report. We would then decide whether one or both should receive the visitor, whether his door or mine should be opened, or whether both doors were to remain closed. I have never liked London, but London seemed less disagreeable when one could walk in quiet, empty places after dark, and upon a Sunday morning sit upon the margin of a fountain almost as alone as if in the country.[360]

As is evident in Yeats's recollection, their friendship and their literary influence on each other have been reflected in their works and ideas. Through this magazine, Yeats, who was not good at foreign languages, could glean new ideas via translations, as translation was an eminent contribution that *The Savoy* made. Yeats honestly appreciated the multilingual Symons for introducing him to foreign literature, especially French literature. Louis Cazamian notes that Symons

[360] W.B. Yeats, 'The Trembling of the Veil', *The Collected Works of W.B Yeats Vol. III: Autobiographies* (New York: Scribner, 1999), p.248.

was one of 'the most illuminating students' of the literary group in fin-de-siècle England, and explains his role as an introducer of foreign literature who made an attempt to define its common spirit, point out its connection with the continental, and especially with French; and it is in Symbolism—a more precise artistic endeavour with a different aim—in which he believes he has discovered its focus.[361]

However, it is inappropriate to think that Symons alone discovered the new literary movement, Symbolism, as is seen in his dedication of his representative work *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* to Yeats. *The Savoy* editorship contributed to deepening an understanding of Symbolism for both Symons and Yeats. As Fletcher summarises, Symbolism is an international literary and artistic movement that developed in a complex manner:

> Symbolism became in the 1890s an international movement, extending to all the arts. But in Britain its practitioners were confined to the Celtic fringe. Indeed the Celt might well have appeared to embody the

[361] Louis Cazamian, 'New Divergencies', *A History of English Literature* (New York: Macmillan, 1938), p.131.

> decadent turned symbolist: myth, magic, political listlessness (in the decade after the fall of Parnell the political messiah); everywhere a race, nowhere a nation. Its international quality proclaims *the Savoy* as representative of the decade (though internationalism means French, not Russian, German or Italian). Symbolism is evident in the supernatural peasant tales of Yeats and 'Fiona Macleod'.[362]

While Yeats was influenced by Symons's translations, Symons learned from the literary revelation of the Celtic poets. They each deepened their interests and insights into the spiritual world during these years, as flat-mates, article contributors, and members of the editorial board for *The Savoy.* The literary exchange between Symons and Yeats is, in fact, admitted in its pages; Yeats became then more deeply absorbed into the spiritual world, attracted to occultism and mysticism, as seen in 'Rosa Alchemica'. While both Symons and Yeats had a shared interest in William Blake, through re-reading of Swedenborg, they were

[362] Ian Fletcher, 'Decadence and the Little Magazines', *Decadence and the 1890s*, eds. by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (Lodon: Edward Arnold, 1979), p.199.

gradually attracted to find their own styles of literature. *The Savoy* actually played a significant role for them as a literary intersection of new ideas, which finally led to the introduction of the Symbolist movement. Symons noted, in a letter to Stuart Merrill dated 26 April 1907, 'You ask about my critical work. The best of it is in *The Symbolist Movement in Literature'*. Symons was proud of the book as an achievement of his literary career, and, in the introduction, he clearly announces the superiority of soul against material things. Additionally, he acknowledges the great influence of Yeats, as he dedicates the book to Yeats:

> After the world has starved its soul long enough in the contemplation and the re-arrangement of material things, comes the turn of the soul; and with it comes the literature of which I write in this volume, a literature in which the visible world is no longer a reality and unseen world no longer a dream.[363]

Symons defines literary Symbolism as 'all an attempt to spiritualise literature, to

[363] Symons, 'Introduction', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), pp.2-3.

evade the old bondage of rhetoric, the old bondage of exteriority', and explains the process of how such literature is to be spiritualised:

> Description is banished that beautiful things may be evoked, magically; the regular beat of verse is broken in order that word may fly, upon subtler wings. Mystery is no longer feared [...] We are coming closer to nature, as we seem to shrink from it with something of horror, disdaining to catalogue the trees of the forest. And as we brush aside the accidents of daily life, in which men and women imagine that they are alone touching reality, we come closer to humanity, to everything in humanity that may have begun before the world and may outlast it.[364]

With regard to this passage, Lucas notes that Symons makes no break between 'truth' and 'beauty'. Symons does insist that, the more true to fact art is, the less truthful it becomes, because it is less able to penetrate beneath accident and casual phenomena ('exteriority') to the 'essence' or 'soul' (favourite words of both

[364] Symons, 'Introduction', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p.5.

Symons and Yeats).[365] Lucas also identifies Yeats's hatred of Naturalism, referring to the essay 'The Body of the Father Christian Rosencrux' that Yeats wrote in 1895. Yeats writes, 'I cannot get it out of my mind that this age of criticism is about to pass, and an age of imagination, of emotion, of moods, of revelation, is about to come in its place […] and when the external world is no more the standard of reality, we will learn again that the great passions are angels of God […] for art is a revelation, and not a criticism'.[366] Just as Symons does not consider Naturalism in literature artistic ('A Note on Zola's Method'), Yeats's hatred of Naturalism is also obvious: for Naturalism, dwelling on the surface of things, is anti-visionary, whereas for both Yeats and Symons, the true function of art is to be visionary, and the externalities of the world are to be rejected.[367] Naturalism 'has its own structure of things: the scientific movement means progress of a kind, means reducing human beings to jostling atoms in an unending fight for survival', and for Yeats, who 'fiercely rejects the adequacy' of such a structure, 'A Vision' must be the most elaborate expression. What he says of

[365] John Lucas, 'From Naturalism to Symbolism', *Decadence and the 1890's*, eds. by Malcolm Bradbury and David Palmer (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p. 143.
[366] Ibid., p.143.
[367] Ibid., p. 143.

Blake in particular applies to himself: 'he was a symbolist who had to invent his symbols; he was a man crying out for a mythology, and trying to make one because he could not find one to his hand'.[368]

Yeats's influence on Symons is also found in the change of Symons's attitude towards the term 'decadence'. In an article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* for November 1893, Symons had already written about the term, as Katherine Lyon Mix points out, giving a 'careful and exact definition'[369]:

> After a fashion it is no doubt a decadence; it has all the qualities that mark the end of great periods, the qualities that we find in the Greek, the Latin, decadence: an intense self-consciousness, a restless curiosity in research, an over-subtilizing refinement upon refinement, a spiritual and moral perversity. If what we call the classic is indeed the supreme art—those qualities of perfect simplicity, perfect sanity, perfect proportion, the supreme qualities—then this representative literature of

[368] John Lucas, 'From Naturalism to Symbolism', *Decadence and the 1890's*, ed. by Ian Fletcher (London: Edward Arnold, 1979), p. 144.
[369] Katherine Lyon Mix, *Study in Yellow: The Yellow Book and Its Contributors* (London: Constable, 1960), p.11.

> today, interesting, beautiful, novel as it is, is really a new and beautiful and interesting disease[370].

It is surprising that the definition of decadence as 'interesting, beautiful, novel as it is, is really a new and beautiful and interesting disease', is completely changed, as 'a mock-interlude' in a few years:

> The interlude, half a mock-interlude, of Decadence, diverted the attention of the critics while something more serious was in preparation. That something more serious has crystallized, for the time, under the form of Symbolism, in which art returns to the one pathway, leading through beautiful things to the eternal beauty.[371]

Symons splits the 'Decadent' movement into two wings, Impressionist and Symbolist, united by a common desire to reach *la vrai vérité*, their own version of

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[370] Arthur Symons, 'The Decadent Movement in Literature', *Arthur Symons: Selected Writings,* ed. by Roger Holdsworth (Manchester: Carcanet Press, 2003), p. 72.

[371] Arthur Symons, 'Introduction', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p.4.

'the essence of things'. Symons does identify the reaction to Positivist philosophy at the heart of the movement, and sees that the turn from Naturalism in France is part of a larger struggle to find a new expression of the soul's reality in a reductive and materialist age. In 1891, Symons took up a London residence in Fountain Court, off the Strand, and, in the same year, he joined the Rhymers' Club. Exactly when he met Yeats is not known, but, within a few years, the two men had become friends and Yeats had moved into the adjoining rooms. There, as conversations about art continued late into the night, the direction of Symons's thought began to change. With the weight of his occult knowledge, his faith in the truth of imagination, and the great force of his personality, Yeats impressed on Symons a belief in the existence of a higher, esoteric realm of being to which art and literature were the key. The effects of this influence can be seen in the Preface to the second edition of *London Nights*, which was written while Symons was on holiday with Yeats in Sligo. Here Symons's concern with the Impressionistic image deepened to a pursuit of the more revelatory symbol, and poems that had been written as the delicate 'impressions' of a London literary man become charged with significance as passing 'moods' linked to the 'universal

consciousness'.[372]

If Symons deserves to be a literary figure as 'most truly as a man in advance of his time',[373] such achievement could not be possible without the fortunate literary encounters and exchange of ideas thorough their contributions to *The Savoy*. They learned from it, and then poured their ideas into it. Symons at his best possesses a remarkable sensitivity and penetration, and he has a secure place in literary history as the man who helped bring the modern aesthetic into being.[374]

Symons's first account of symbolism was published in *Harper's Magazine* in November, 1893, as 'The Decadent Movement in Literature'. His second formed the initial chapter of *The Symbolist*, which was published in 1899. The two differ in their emphasis: The second lays more stress on the aspect of symbolism that partakes of mysticism. In the interval, he had been finding his way, aided by Yeats, in that direction—a direction less natural, as he admits in his dedication of the book to Yeats, to himself than to the Irish poet. His later essays on art indicate a truer appreciation of the common elements of symbolism in literature and

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[372] Eric Warner and Graham Hough, eds. *Strangeness and Beauty: An Anthology of Aesthetic Criticism 1840-1910*, Volume 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1983), pp.212-213.
[373] Ibid., p.214.
[374] Ibid., p.215.

Impressionism in painting, those parallel movements of reaction against Realism. Both exploit not the reality of mere appearance, but something beneath and beyond appearance.[375] Symons's understanding of symbolism is not taken exclusively from the continent, for he in fact learnt from Yeats, the Celtic poet. In the background of Symons's *The Symbolist*, *The Savoy* surely offered a literary forum for them to achieve 'a literature in which the visible world is no longer a reality and unseen world no longer a dream'.

In spite of the short span of publication, *The Savoy* was a crucial experience for Symons because he was able to create the ideal literary space when his foresightedness was at peak of his career, just after the publication of *London Nights*. The cosmopolitan openness reflected in its editorial policy was unfortunately unable to appeal to a wider readership effectively. To survive the competitive market, it seems that every careful attempt at risk management, such as watching Beardsley's illustrations, worked adversely, reducing the opportunity to succeed among many other illustrated periodicals, while certain conservative

[375] Ruth Zabriskie Temple, *The Critic's Alchemy: A Study of the Introduction of French Symbolism into England* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1953), pp.154-155.

enemies were always looking for a chance to obstruct its success. In spite of such a circumstances, however, throughout his editorship of the magazine, Symons nurtured his insights towards a possibility of literature that finally came to fruition with the publication of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. When his critical essays with translations that had already appeared in periodicals were published as an anthology of literary criticism with a solid title, *The Symbolist Movement*, the book finally attracted readers' interest effectively and globally. We know that the book greatly influenced James Joyce, T.S. Eliot[376], Ezra Pound[377], and even Japanese poets such as Kanbara Ariake, who led the symbolist movement in literature in Japan, causing a translation boom of Symons works.[378] Due to its title, the book may seem written consistently on 'symbolism', but in fact, Symons discusses various writers at the same time, and some, such as Zola or Balzac, can hardly be categorised as 'symbolists'. With regard to this ambiguity about

[376] Eliot writes 'I myself owe Mr. Symons a great debt; but for having read his book I should not, in the year 1908, have heard of Laforgue or Rimbaud' in 'Baudelaire and the Symbolists by Peter Quennell', *The Criterion*, IX, 35 (January 1930), p.357.

[377] In a letter written in 1911, Pound lists Symons as one of his 'gods', together with Plato, Dante, Spinoza, and Pater. Thomas Tanselle G., 'Two Early letters of Ezra Pound', *American Literature,* XXXIV, 1. (March 1962), p.118.

[378] With regard to the list of Japanese translations of Symons's works, see Appendix II.

assigning a label to literary talent, Symons actually writes much before publication of the book that 'The latest movement in European literature has been called by many names, none of them quite exact or comprehensive—Decadence, Symbolism, Impressionism, for instance. It is easy to dispute over words, and we shall find that Verlaine objects to being called a Decadent, Maeterlinck to being called a Symbolist, Huysmans to being called an Impressionist. These terms, as it happens, have been adopted as the badge of little separate cliques'.[379] Because of this consciousness that Symons had, one cannot stop feeling that the title of the book 'the Symbolist' is inadequate, without representing its contents.

However, on the other hand, the title can give the impression that this book is an organized study on a certain literary movement, effectively appealing to readers who are interested in the latest literary trend. Apart from his personal preferences, Symons discusses the latest, various styles of literature, one by one and equally, from his subjective point of view. This effort is unchanged, based on the same sort of passion Symons exhibited in *The Savoy* as a presenter of literature both international and domestic. Because the editorial policy allowed

[379] Symons, 'The Decadent Movement in Literature', *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 87 (November 1893), p.858.

him to create an international literary exchange in its pages as if the ‘cosmopolitan right to visit’ is realised there, freed from any restriction of schools, name values, or nationalities, *The Savoy* suggests the possibility of a cosmopolitan magazine that welcomes the interchange of international talents, accelerating global shifts towards new literature.

Chapter 4

The Ambivalence of Cosmopolitanism and Symons:

Rereading *Spiritual Adventures*

Finally, in this chapter, I will discuss Symons's book of short fiction, *Spiritual Adventures* (1905), from the viewpoint that Symons reveals his sense of ambivalence on cosmopolitanism. In chapters 1 and 2, I have focused on his favourable gaze upon the diversity of human lives as the significant feature of his cosmopolitanism. In chapter 3, Symons's struggle and challenge to realise cosmopolitan literary space in the form of the periodical is exhibited. However, it does not mean that Symons optimistically believed that we are all able to communicate with each other as world citizens without difficulties. While he is able to aestheticize solitude among multitudes as a metropolitan poet who prioritises urban mobility, it seems he cannot ignore a sense of detachment of his own, which might be interpreted as melancholy. In *Spiritual Adventures,* Symons

applies a symbolism of water, gathering each story in order to exhibit images of fluidity of life, highlighting each character with a certain temperament who always feels a sense of detachment from others. Symons's sincere approach to this concern as an author would contribute to the amelioration of the hitherto unjust reception of this book.

Since his debut as an author in the 1880s, up until today, it seems Symons has enthusiastically and exclusively described the positive aspects of cosmopolitanism, including the pleasure of communicating with anonymous crowds, the aesthetics of nomadic life, and the invention of cosmopolitan magazines that served as a lively and borderless intersection of literary talents, but it seems he finally decided to tackle the concern that had long been inherent in him: that one's subjectivity cannot always be welcomed and happily understood by others, even if one makes every effort to adjust oneself to more comfortable circumstances overall. In order to highlight this concern, in an impressionistic writing style, Symons carefully inserts various images of water, such as a drop or a great current, as backgrounds, evoking a strange sense of openness to readers as if each character in each story remains half-freed, yet half-confined in their places,

or is equally floating in the greater stream of life without noticing each other. Symons succeeds in organising these stories under the singular, consistent tone of water throughout the book, thereby creating an ambitious and challenging new style of autobiographical fiction. Published just before the first symptoms of his mental breakdown, *Spiritual Adventures* is in fact an achievement in Symons's literary career, while the sense of disturbance in the last scene in Venice seems an inevitably ominous prophecy as if Symons had expected his own approaching madness.[380] Since *Spiritual Adventures* is an anthology of short stories, some stories have already attracted readers' interest, especially by the autobiographical story 'A Prelude to Life', which is a helpful source to know the author Symons as a youth, but *Spiritual Adventures* has seldom been appreciated as a book.

Since the 1970s, critics have begun to unpack Symons; Frank Kermode values *Spiritual Adventures* as 'an unjustly neglected book',[381] and Tetsutaro Kawakami[382] declares in his book of literary criticisms, titled *Yushu-Nikki* [A

[380] Symons was certified insane in 1908 and committed to Brooke House, in Upper Clapton Road, East London. Karl Beckson, 'Fatal initiation of madness', *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p.261.
[381] Frank Kermode, *Romantic Image* (New York: Routledge, 2002), p.86.
[382] Tetsutaro Kawakami (1902–1980) is a Japanese literary critic. Influenced by French Symbolism, he translated the works of Paul Valéry and André Gide into Japanese. He also published Japanese translations of some of Symons's literary

Journal of the Dusk], that—after a thorough reading of Symons's works—he finally regards *Spiritual Adventures* and the series of travel writings as representative works of Symons and I believe it must be a fair assessment of Symons's literary achievement,[383] because there is 'a sort of, transparent darkness'[384] in *Spiritual Adventures* [trans. by the author]. As seen in the comments by Kermode and Kawakami, *Spiritual Adventures* proves Symons's literary achievement as an author of fiction. While W.G. Blaikie Murdoch finds many qualities 'far too subtle for criticism or description' in *Spiritual Adventures*, it is 'the most personal work which Mr. Symons has written in prose; for though it is a book of stories, these are used as a medium for the expression of emotions and ideas'.[385]

As a matter of fact, many of Symons's works are often regarded as less organized, especially when they are published as a volume; even in his highly reputed book of criticisms, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, the 'scrappy'[386]

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criticisms on French writers. (Appendix II)
[383] Tetsutaro Kawakami *Yushu-Nikki* [in Japanese; A Journal of the Dusk] (Tokyo: Shincho-sha, 1970), p.179.
[384] Ibid., p.182.
[385] W. G. Blaikie Murdoch, *The Work of Arthur Symons: An Appreciation* (Edinburgh: J.J. Gray, 1906), p.41.
[386] Frank Kermode, *Romantic Image* (New York: Routledge, 2002), p.128.

impression given throughout the volume is undeniable. Richard Ellmann observes that what Symons lacks as a critic is the ability to generalise, while Symons's remarks are better than his conclusions.[387] This chapter finally proves that Symons is a capable author who provides readers a carefully organised anthology of short stories.

Flux of Water as a Background of One's Life

In 1903, Symons announced in the preface of *Plays, Acting and Music* that 'a book of "imaginary portraits" is to follow, under the title of "Spiritual Adventures"'[388]. Under the influence of *Imaginary Portraits* (1887) by Walter Pater, Symons surely intended to publish a coordinated, unified volume that binds together stories already published in magazines and newly written stories. *Spiritual Adventures* consists of eight stories in total and proceeds with a different

[387] Richard Ellmann, 'Introduction', *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, by Arthur Symons (New York: EP Dutton, 1958), p. x.
[388] Symons, 'Preface', *Plays, Acting, and Music* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1903), no page number.

character in each story. The hero of the first, autobiographical story, 'A Prelude to Life', could be seen as Symons himself. Thereafter, the stories continue as 'Esther Kahn', a story of a young, Jewish actress brought up in London's East End near Docks. The third story is 'Christian Trevalga', wherein its hero, a pianist, cannot avoid his collapse at the end of his absolute pursuit of music. The fourth story, 'The Childhood of Lucy Newcome',[389] is a story of a pale-faced girl who denies God and secludes herself in her imagination. She ultimately faces the death of her pious father. The fifth story is 'The Death of Peter Waydelin', and its hero, a painter, who dies at the age of twenty-four, reminds readers of Aubrey Beardsley, who worked with Symons for *The Savoy*. The sixth story is 'An Autumn City', wherein an aged connoisseur, Daniel Roserra, takes his young wife to his favourite city, Arles, but she does not like it there. He gradually becomes exhausted in his unrewarding efforts to please his young wife. The seventh story is 'Seaward Lackland', a story of a fisherman's son who dies for the love of God.

[389] 'The Childhood of Lucy Newcome' first appeared in *The Savoy* (December 1896), but in April 1896, the sequel, titled 'Pages from the Life of Lucy Newcome', had already appeared in the same magazine. In 1985, Johnson found a typescript 'The Life and Adventures of Lucy Newcome' at the Princeton Library that is assumed to have been written by Symons as the sequel to 'Pages from the Life of Lucy Newcome'.

The eighth and last story is 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan', in which the narrator, 'I', reads Luxulyan's journal after his death. Max Saunders points out, this structure is quite similar to Rilke's *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910), because Luxulyan is surely conscious of the voice of madness approaching him as he listens to the roar of confined patients in the distance while lying in a gondola in Venice. [390] It is thus obvious that each story has an individual plot with a different heroine/hero; but each story is in fact connected by an elemental image, 'water', which gives a consistent impression to readers. With regard to the nuance of this literary world with aquatic imagery, Kawakami describes it as 'transparent darkness', for it evokes a feeling that every colour pigment in each story is quietly infused within a stream, as if it were a deep water vein. Symons sets the image of the ebb and flow of water throughout the book that finally serves as the background shared by each character, including Symons himself.

In any study on Symons, especially in order to trace his life, 'A Prelude to Life' is cited most frequently from *Spiritual Adventures*. This is the first story in

[390] Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.254.

the volume in which the narrator, Symons, describes his life from childhood to adolescence until he goes to London in order to establish himself. This lone autobiographical piece by Symons is doubtlessly an important source of understanding his background. However, it would be more adequate to regard 'A Prelude to Life' as an autobiographical fiction than a plain autobiography.

As Beckson analyses, 'A Prelude to Life' is 'a vision of the past, which, like Joyce's "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man", depicts the embryonic artist as a romantic hero'[391]; Symons would have, more or less, dramatised himself as a romantic hero and his own past in 'A Prelude to Life'. With regard to the direct connection between Symons and Joyce, having read Joyce's manuscripts of *Dubliners* and some poems before they were published, Symons believed in the talent of young, unknown Joyce, who was at that time refused by publishers. Symons helped Joyce publish his first suite of poems, *Chamber Music,* by sending a letter of strong recommendation to Elkin Mathews, the first publisher of Joyce's work.[392] Symons's eye as a foresighted editor and literary critic at his peak might

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391 Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A Life* (Oxford: Clarendon: 1987), p.6.

392 James G. Nelson, *Elkin Mathews: Publisher to Yeats, Joyce, Pound* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), p. 115.

have then searched for a new way of telling one's life in a style of fiction inspired by the ambitious young writer, Joyce. It is probable that Joyce followed the style Symons employed in *Spiritual Adventures* later in his *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, as Joyce clearly expresses his respect and affection to Symons throughout his life.[393] In *The Stream of Consciousness and Beyond in Ulysses*, Erwin R. Steinberg begins the chapter titled 'The Sources of the Stream' with 'Perhaps a good place to start would be with Arthur Symons's *The Symbolist Movement in Literature',* and writes that the work by Symons would have influenced Joyce significantly and contributed to his ability to 'translate some of the intellectual and aesthetic ideas of his day into imaginative fictional techniques'.[394] From this viewpoint, Beckson's analysis to see an analogy between Symons's 'A Prelude to Life' and Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is rather persuasive.

Of course, as seen in Symons's clear announcement, 'a book of "imaginary

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[393] Symons's literary output was not prolific as it had been before his breakdown in 1908; and, after 1925, Symons became increasingly isolated as his old friends died one by one. However, Joyce never forgot Symons as his arbiter in poetry and visited Symons. Symons, ed. by Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: Selected Letters 1880–1935* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), pp.203–204.
[394]Erwin R. Steinberg, *The Stream of Consciousness and Beyond in Ulysses* (London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973), pp.257–258.

portraits" is to follow, under the title of "Spiritual Adventures"'[395], the influence of Pater's work—in this case, *Imaginary Portraits*—on Symons has long been mentioned as great and doubtless. Saunders observes that *Spiritual Adventures* is 'one example of the composite portrait form which follows closely in the foot-steps of Pater's *Imaginary Portraits*, and which is exemplary in incorporating all of the component traits'.[396] Symons is a link between Pater and Joyce in regard to a way to dramatically describe the narrator's past, which is the author's own past as well, as if he were involved in a long life pilgrimage, while 'the use of mythic pattern' in Pater's *Imaginary Portraits* is 'not fortuitous',[397] and 'Joyce does much more extensively than Symons' in 'setting up a contrast between the artist and his rather narrow and inartistic environment'.[398] Each of the works cannot be categorised as mere autobiography, because 'there is an added sense of dramatic integrity'[399] that reveals an interesting genealogy of the same literary

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[395] Symons, 'Preface', *Plays, Acting, and Music* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1903).
[396] Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.252.
[397] Jan Baker Gordon, 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual Adventures*', *English Literature in Transition 1880–1920*, Volume 12 Number 3 (1969), p.110.
[398] Lawrence W. Markert, *Arthur Symons: Critic of the Seven Arts* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1988), p.54.
[399] Ibid., p.54.

genre, autobiographical fiction, from Pater to Symons to Joyce. As Gordon points out, the Victorian autobiographical novel typically concludes by visualizing autobiography as art and Joyce finally literalises this shift by way of Symons.[400]

'A Prelude to Life' has a special value in all eight stories included in *Spiritual Adventures*. However, if Symons simply wished to publish his autobiography, even with a dramatic effect, why did he decide to compile it as the first piece of a volume of short fictions, naming it 'A Prelude to Life'? Markert analyses the reason as follows:

> 'A Prelude to Life' is intended to evoke a number of the themes which will be developed further in the stories that follow it in the volume and that the piece itself is organized dramatically to depict aspect of the narrator's temperament, a narrator who in the final analysis is Symons. [401]

[400] Jan Baker Gordon, 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual Adventures*', *English Literature in Transition 1880–1920*, Volume 12 Number 3 (1969), p.114.
[401] Lawrence W. Markert, *Arthur Symons: Critic of the Seven Arts* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1988), p.54.

In fact, all the heroes/heroines in the stories in the volume equally share the same theme, embarking on 'spiritual adventures', which often seem too painful to call 'adventures' when 'struggle' would be an adequate expression as they are all conscious of the gap between themselves and others due to their inherent temperament, and their efforts to adjust themselves/others are never rewarded as they wish.

Since *Spiritual Adventures* is a collection of short fictions, each character follows each plot, in a different place, facing various problems. However, even at the end of the story, the characters are equally at a loss, or the problems they faced at first and their struggles are never happily solved. The sense of uncertainty or disturbance is still left suspended. Symons does not give an easy, convenient solution for his characters, as if he abandons inventing a happy ending as a mighty author of a book of fiction. Symons cannot take a detached attitude from his characters, because he is in fact one of the heroes involved in the book of *Spiritual Adventures*. Gordon explains the point that all the heroines/heroes are 'the projections of the self, generated from the author Symons himself'.[402] All the

[402] Jan Baker Gordon, 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual*

characters, including 'I' in 'A Prelude to life' as Symons himself, share the same temperament; therefore, Symons also struggles to solve problems with every effort. With regard to this reciprocal structure, as if 'I' and unknown others' lives are incessantly reflecting each other without direct encounters, Saunders observes 'the range of the book's forms of auto/biography is striking' because 'it includes not only autobiography (or autobiografiction), and pseudo-journal, but varieties of pseudo-biography as well, some more autobiographical than others'. [403] Considering the fact that he finally collapsed mentally in 1908, Symons's own disturbance at the time of writing this book was probably real and pressing; therefore, the situation each character suffers must be rather as serious as Symons's own and would never be easily treated. Kawakami also points out that the sentiment of each character in *Spiritual Adventures* is, to a greater or lesser extent, Symons's as well.[404] In fact, when readers' eyes move to the following stories after the first piece, 'A Prelude to Life', they have to face strange moments

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Adventures', *English Literature in Transition 1880–1920*, Volume 12 Number 3 (1969), p.109.

[403] Max Saunders, *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiografiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.254.

[404] Tetsutaro Kawakami *Yushu-Nikki* [A Journal of the Dusk] (Tokyo: Shincho-sha, 1970), p.205.

evoked incessantly, as if aspects of Symons are coming forth to their eyes, even in the stories of heroines such as Esther Kahn or Lucy Newcome.

This effect is surely caused because readers have read 'A Prelude to Life' first, which is Symons's planned effect. Symons must have composed the order of stories in *Spiritual Adventures* carefully, as if composing an orchestral symphony, in order for each piece to develop gradually to the finale. As a critic of music, and as a fervent disciple of Pater, Symons might have tried to compose his *Spiritual Adventures* as an artwork that 'constantly aspires towards the condition of music'.[405] Carefully composed pieces are bound together in different tunes and lengths under the title of *Spiritual Adventures*, sharing a main theme, and the 'Prelude' should exhibit a significant role, as the first piece leads the subsequent stories to the finale.

In 'A Prelude to Life', the narrator Symons follows the earliest memory, tracing his origin. This is a kind of personal confession, as he describes his background, his temperament, and his direction and beliefs he decides to take before sailing out to his new life in London. Regarding his background, Symons

[405] Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p.86.

recalls it as such:

> My parents were never very long in one place, and I have never known what it was to have a home, as most children know it. [...] If I have been a vagabond, and have never been able to root myself in any one place in the world, it is because I have no early memories of any one sky or soil. It has freed me from many prejudices in giving me its own unresting kind of freedom; but it has cut me off from whatever is stable, of long growth in the world. [406]

Due to the occupation of Symons's father, Mark Symons, as a Wesleyan minister, his family never stayed in one place. Ministers were assigned to circuits for no more than three years, an arrangement that involved much travelling both within the circuit and between circuits. Arthur was born on 28 February 1865, as the first boy in Symons's family, near the port at the Milford Haven, Wales. However, when he was only one year old, the family moved to new place; firstly the island

[406] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), pp.3–4.

of Guernsey, and in two years, they moved to Alnwick, Northumberland, and then St. Ives in Cornwall. After Cornwall, they moved to Tavistock, Devon.[407] As Beckson states, 'the emotional and psychological effect of these constant moves on the young Symons was profound'.[408] Symons's voice that 'if I have been a vagabond, and have never been able to root myself in any one place in the world, it is because I have no early memories of any one sky or soil'[409] echoes in the third piece, 'Christian Trevalga'. Symons and Trevalga share a sense of rootlessness, without any memory of belonging to one solid place, a homeland. The hero of the story, Trevalga, is described as 'he had never known what it was to feel the earth solid under his feet'.[410]According to Edward Relph, 'to have roots in a place is to have a secure point from which to look out on the world, a firm grasp of one's own position in the order of things, and a significant spiritual and psychological attachment to somewhere in particular'.[411] In fact, As Ian Fletcher states, Symons was 'essentially a rootless man, at home in any part of the world

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[407] Miyazawa, Shinichi, 'The Budding Madness of Arthur Symons (1)', *The Kagoshima Keidai Ronshu: The Studies on the Social and Cultural Science*. Vol. 19 No.2, The Kagoshima Keizai Daigaku Gakkai (1978), pp. 131–153.
[408] Karl Beckson, *Arthur Symons: A. Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), p.7.
[409] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.3.
[410] Ibid., p.57.
[411] Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1986), p.38.

because he belonged to none',[412] which was different from Symons's close friend and poet, Yeats,[413] as 'Yeats's career can be seen as the successful attempt to control a successive set of identities'— Symons might be 'a poet who failed in the search for a single identity'.[414] However, it is probable that Symons also chose such freedom of his own will in order to ensure his eyes were freed from any prejudice, or he wanted to justify his rootlessness as such.

Young Symons's attitude to protect his transparent identity freed from any prejudice is most apparent when he resists the religious belief inherent to his circumstances, especially from his religious father, which is so similar to the heroine Lucy's small, but strong, resistance in the fourth story, 'The Childhood of Lucy Newcome'. When Lucy is told a religious dogma, 'God sees everything', she answers that she would build 'a room all walls and no windows, within which she would be good or bad as she pleased, without His seeing her'.[415] When readers

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[412] Ian Fletcher, 'Exploration and Recoveries —II: Symons, Yeats and the Demonic Dance', *The London Magazine,* Vol.7 No.6 (June 1960), p.48.
[413] They lived in the rooms adjacent each other in the same building in Temple, London for several years and Yeats writes about the days with nostalgia in his *Autobiographies.*
[414] Ian Fletcher, 'Exploration and Recoveries —II: Symons, Yeats and the Demonic Dance', *The London Magazine,* Vol.7 No.6 (June 1960), p.48.
[415] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), pp. 83–84.

read the scene, they will recall the young Symons's attitude to his family's religious background in 'A Prelude to Life'. In the church, the narrator, Symons 'dreaded lest the preacher should come up to me with some irresistible power', feeling 'nothing but that horrible uneasiness, but feared it might leave me helpless, at the man's mercy, or at God's perhaps'.[416] He is fully conscious of his stubbornness and understands others would regard him as 'a man who shut his eyes and declared that he could not see'.[417] However, Symons actually chooses his life, saying 'I prefer being blind', in spite of the advice by pious people around him: 'You have only to open your eyes'.[418]

The scene in which Symons expresses his attitude against his religious circumstance is, at the same time, the scene in which he declares his direction at his own will. In the end of 'A Prelude to Life', he chooses his religion as 'a religion of the eyes' and 'devoutly practiced that religion' in order to establish himself in the London literary scene:

[416] Ibid., pp.16–17.
[417] Ibid., p.17.
[418] Ibid., p.17.

> If there ever was a religion of the eyes, I have devoutly practiced that religion. I noted every face that passed me on the pavement; I looked into the omnibuses, the cabs, always with me the same eager hope of seeing some beautiful or interesting person, some gracious movement, a delicate expression, which would be gone if I did not catch it as it went.[419]

On a city street, in a crowd, Symons finds himself in 'an ecstasy of delight at all that movement, noise, colour, and confusion', intoxicated by what Baudelaire called 'the bath of multitude'.[420]

After Symons came to London in the early 1890s, Symons rapidly developed his talent as a literary critic and poet. With his 'religion of eyes', through which his eyes were freed from any bias or prejudice, he never restricted his field; thus, his pen energetically wrote a numbers of essays on not only classics but also on popular entertainment, such as performance in music halls, which strongly attracted Symons. As John Stokes observes, Symons 'sought a

[419] Ibid., p.32.
[420] Ibid., p.27.

vantage point that would allow aesthetic appreciation without moral judgement or social commitment'.[421]

Such a young, ambitious artist as Symons sailing to a new world is reflected in the characters of the following stories in *Spiritual Adventures*. For example, Jewish heroine Esther in 'Esther Kahn', who was once a girl indifferent to others, decides to have various experiences, including her first intercourse, in order to accomplish her art as an actress, and in 'Christian Trevalga', a prodigious pianist, Trevalga, pursues his artistic accomplishment, believing his total success can be accomplished by falling in love with a woman. Their adventures in life—although they are often painful challenges or unfruitful struggles—reflect Symons's own dilemma between love affairs and the art he pursues.

Daniel Roserra's exhaustion in pleasing his young wife in 'An Autumn City' also reflects Symons's struggle to satisfy his young girlfriend,[422] Lydia, a music hall dancer in London, and Seaward Lackland's agony between a feeling of sin

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[421] John Stokes, *In the Nineties* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.xxi.

[422] As *Spiritual Adventure* was first published in 1905, some studies regard the model of Daniel Roserra's wife, Livia, as Symons's wife, Rhoda. However, 'An Autumn City' was first published in the literary journal, *Dome* (February 1899), two years before Symons's marriage; thus, it would be rather natural to see the model as the young music-hall dancer, Lydia, who strongly attracted Symons and later left him when she decided to marry old rich man.

and his love for God is actually understood as that of Symons, for he also suffered from the feeling, the burden-like personal dilemma, due to his religious background.

In 'The Death of Peter Waydelin', the model of the hero, Waydelin, is highly probably that of Symons's business partner, Aubrey Beardsley. We see a figure of Symons as a narrator who reveals a deep sympathy for the artist's premature death, an artist who pursued a style of grotesque but surely artistic effect.

The final piece, 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan', evokes in readers a sense of disturbance, as this piece foresees the coming of Symons's inevitable breakdown after its publication. Through recalling his past in the style of journal, Luxulyan's writing on the last page of the journal finally becomes 'faint and unsteady'.[423] Symons experiences his first schizophrenic symptoms in 1908 in Italy. The strange concordance of the fictional and the real seems as if Symons foresaw the aftermath of Luxulyan as inevitable, as if his life imitated his art. The last sentence of 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan', the very end of

[423] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p. 205.

Spiritual Adventures, seems to show Symons's inexplicable uneasiness at that time: 'I do not know why I felt a cold shiver run through me, for the sky was cloudless, and it was the month of June'.[424]

All the above characters in *Spiritual Adventures* equally represent some aspects of the author, Symons, as if each were an illusory echo. Each character lives his/her own individual life, but at the same time, readers cannot stop feeling they are somewhere bound together as 'the projections'[425]of Symons, sharing the same temperament and the same struggle, even though they are given different genders or professions in different places. They all feel a sense of alienation from the majority of others, and even when they notice and try to adjust themselves to others, nobody can succeed happily, because that is also the problem Symons sees as his own. Their tragedy begins when the characters try to change or ignore their own/others' temperament, and in fact their painful struggles are never easily rewarded once they try to negate their or someone else's temperament or forcefully adjust to one side. Symons sees that his innate temperament is

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[424] Ibid., p.206.
[425] Jan Baker Gordon, 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual Adventures*', *English Literature in Transition 1880–1920*, Volume 12 Number 3 (1969), p.109.

unchangeable, even if he knows it is different from the majority.

Such detached, unsecured feeling from the others can be aestheticised by the idea of 'rootlessness' Symons recognises with an 'unresting kind of freedom'. Instead of gaining 'eyes freed from many prejudices', he interprets his own identity as cut off from 'whatever is stable, of long growth in the world'.[426] In *Spiritual Adventures*, the stories' protagonists cannot escape from their unstable wandering in life, even if they forcefully try to find a solid, secure place to settle.

This perspective is supported by the various image of water flowing behind the stories, evoking the impossibility of escape once one is immersed in a stream. The stories in *Spiritual Adventures* start from a place of water, as Symons was brought up near the ports of Cornwall. Each character, including Symons, actually shares his or her 'prelude'. In 'A Prelude to Life', regarding his childhood, Symons writes that he only has fragmentary memories, such as 'a great ship was launched in a harbour' instead of 'memories of any sky or soil'.[427]

Esther Kahn was 'born in one of those dark, evil-smelling streets with

[426] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.4.
[427] Ibid., pp.3–4.

strange corners which lie about the Docks'[428]on the London riverside before she starts her career as an actress; Christian Trevalga, who 'had never known what it was to feel the earth solid under his feet', was born in 'a little sea-coast village in Cornwall, and the earliest thing he remembered was the sharp, creaking voice of the sea-gulls, as they swept past him at the edge of the cliff, high up over the sea'.[429] Actually, many of the heroes have their origins in the same seaside County, Cornwall, as did Symons. Christian Trevalga, Daniel Rossera in 'An Autumn City', and Henry Luxulyan in 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan' all come from Cornwall. 'The Death of Peter Waydelin' starts with a scene in which Waydelin and 'I' are talking in the seaside resort of Bognor, and Seaward Lackland was born in the cottage 'which stood right on the edge of the cliff above Carbis Bay'. Gordon writes, 'As one proceeds in his reading of *Spiritual Adventures*, as awareness grows that even the characters' names are important to the general theme',[430] and for the reason of 'the queer name of Seaward', it is explained in the story 'because his mother had looked out to sea, as

[428] Ibid., p.35.
[429] Ibid., p.57.
[430] Jan Baker Gordon, 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual Adventures*', *English Literature in Transition 1880–1920*, Volume 12 Number 3 (1969), p.107.

soon as she had strength enough to be propped up in bed, praying for her husband every minute of the time until he came back'.[431] However, his last name, 'Lackland', is also symbolical as if it is a label for a person who cannot settle himself to a solid place. Only Lucy's place of origin is not mentioned concretely, while the dark and damp circumstances without bright sunshine are enhanced; she is described as a pale child who 'walks in her sleep', and as if she is floating in a day dream-like transparent world. Symons concludes the last scene of the first story, 'A Prelude to Life', by comparing himself to a dog in a stream before sailing out his spiritual adventures:

> I grasped at all these sights with the same futile energy as a dog that I once saw standing in an Irish stream, and snapping at the bubbles that ran continually past him on the water. Life ran past me continually, and I tried to make all its bubbles my own.[432]

[431] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.135.
[432] Ibid., p.32.

It is obvious that Symons emphasises the image of water in the first story 'A Prelude to Life', but the following stories also share the image of their origins in the water. To see water as symbolic of the 'origin of a life' is the oldest and most common interpretation since Thales of Miletus. However, what is unique about Symons is that he employs the symbolism of water not only as a beginning, but also as an emblem for those who embody the temperament of water—recognising personal detachment to the outer world, destined to experience a life of fluidity, seeking one solid place with 'the same futile energy'.[433] Symons regards each hero/heroine as a projection of himself. Each story shares its 'prelude', which seems an announcement that they are all sailing out to the stream of life.

Time and Water

It is inadequate to regard Symons as simply employing the symbolism of water by random distributions of scenes of water, such as a river or the seaside, in the text.

[433] Ibid., p.32.

Of course, he intends to give the visual impression of water to his readers, much like the painter of impressionism, Whistler, whose paintings Symons highly appreciates in his criticisms as a master of Impressionism. In 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual Adventures',* Gordon explains the association between the art of Symons and Whistler by using the example of the 'frame' of painting:

> The architectural and narrative frame with which Symons commenced his story is collapsed, and the distinction between art and life becomes ever thinner as a consequence of Lackland's oath. One is reminded of the evolution in the frame design of late Victorian visual art. Highly decorative in the art of the eighties, the frames gradually came to be part of meaning of the picture, until finally with Whistler, the frame disappears altogether and the world becomes but an extension of the internal world of the painting.[434]

[434] Jan Baker Gordon, 'The Dialogue of Life and Art in Arthur Symons's *Spiritual Adventures*', *English Literature in Transition 1880–1920*, Volume 12 Number 3 (1969), p.112.

Symons, fully understanding the mode of water, should have intended the effect of dissolution, like Whistler. Each story, which holds the image of the transparent fluid 'water' in its own way, can quietly prevail. Thus, each 'frame' of the superficially independent stories in *Spiritual Adventures* plays out one by one. Symons's incessant use of water imagery thus plays an important role in making the whole effect of 'dissolution' possible, which is 'the disappearance of frames', as Gordon suggests.

However, it seems to be part of the effect that Symons intended. He delicately treats various modes of water not only as fluid but also as a drop of water. The water image as a smaller unit, 'a drop', is also shown in *Spiritual Adventures*, which evokes an obsession Symons surely suffered. In 'A Prelude to Life', Symons reveals his obsession to catch every moment in front of him in an image of bubbles of water:

> If there ever was a religion of the eyes, I have devoutly practiced that religion. [...] This search without an aim grew to be almost a torture to

> me; my eyes ached with the effort, but I could not control them. At every moment, I knew, some spectacle awaited them; I grasped at all these sights with the same futile energy as a dog that I once saw standing in an Irish stream, and snapping at the bubbles that ran continually past him on the water. Life ran past me continually, and I tried to make all its bubbles my own.[435]

Symons describes his origin as if he belongs to water, not to solid land, emphasising his transparent nature or temperament. Here, in the last scene of 'A Prelude to Life', Symons decides to see everything, every moment in front of him in the new place, London, as an ambitious young artist. For Symons, 'to see' is synonymous with 'to experience', and such a struggle to see everything, experience everything, inevitably includes pain. Young Symons's insatiableness for catching every sight, every new experience, is reflected in the characters of the following stories; for example, in the young heroine, Esther Kahn. Munro explains the analogy:

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[435] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.32.

> The heroine's calculated acceptance of a liaison with Philip Haygarth in the hope that the experience will perfect her performance as an actress is also typical of Symons, who took great care to acquire a wide range of experience, believing that only in this way could the artist achieve the fullness of vision necessary to his vocation.[436]

Like Symons, Esther also seeks new sin experience in order to change her life and becomes an actress. For her art, she accepts her first sexual relationship with a playwright, Haygarth, believing some dramatic change would happen. However, 'the world had in no sense changed for her, as she had been supposing it would change; a new excitement had come into her life, and that was all'.[437] Thus, she gradually learns that nothing, or nobody, can change her dramatically. Near the end of the story, Haygarth, having deserted Esther, now tries to come back to her, as he is overwhelmed by her performance. She understands she might take him

[436] John M. Munro, *Arthur Symons* (New York: Twayne, 1969), p.105.
[437] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.45.

back, but in the last scene, Esther repeats, 'it would make no difference', weeping uncontrollable tears.[438] Esther once ignored her inborn temperament and tried to be sociable for her career, although she was conscious of her inborn artistic temperament, as if she were detached from the outer world, feeling alone even while existing in a family. In order to accomplish her art, she devoutly sought new experiences, just as Symons, in 'A Prelude to Life', sought 'all these sights' in front of him.[439]

The ending of 'Esther Kahn' seems rather ambiguous regarding whether she happily accepts Haygarth again, because a decision is not clearly made by Esther. The unfinished impression may be stressful to readers who prefer a clear conclusion. However, the ending of 'Esther Kahn' is one of the scenes that most reflects Symons, because Symons also states that the decision about Esther's boyfriend 'would make no difference'. The most serious and painful fact is Esther's final recognition that she has to live with her sense of detachment toward the outer world, as her temperament cannot be changed. She once tried to adjust herself to others, belong to someone, to the mature Haygarth, but she only knows

[438] Ibid., p.53.
[439] Ibid., p.32.

that the world does not change as she has expected. At the end of her 'spiritual adventure' of seeking and having many moments, many experiences, she learns she must live with her temperament, accepting it, for the accomplishment of her art as an actress. The accomplishment of art is 'all she had wanted', she fully understands; and yet, the scene leaves a certain painful impression with the readers as though it were an inevitable result for those who devoutly sought an achievement.

The pain or exhaustion caused by such passionate desire to see, to experience a new world, is repeatedly written in *Spiritual Adventures*. As Symons writes, 'I grasped at all these sights with the same futile energy as a dog that I once saw standing in an Irish stream', the desire of 'seeing everything' must be self-exhaustive like 'snapping at the bubbles that ran continually past him on the water'.[440] Such desire would be favourable for young, ambitious youth if it is moderate, but in Symons's case, the eagerness to grasp bubble-like, tiny, passing sights surely involves extreme, somewhat neurotic sensitivity. For instance, his extreme sensitivity to 'a second' is shown in the description of a nightmare

[440] Ibid., p.32.

Symons repeatedly suffered in his childhood:

> I awoke, stifling a scream, my hair damp with sweat, out of impossible tasks in which time shrank and swelled in some deadly game with life; something had to be done in a second, and all eternity passed, lingering, while the second poised over me like a drop of water always about to drip: it fell, and I was annihilated into depth under depth of blackness.[441]

This paragraph first appeared in 'A Prelude to Life' in 1905, but Symons again used it in his *Confessions: A Study in Pathology,* a book in which Symons tried to analyse and explain how his madness started in 1908. As Beckson explains, after 1910, Symons's articles reveal 'an extraordinary and pathetic incoherence'.[442] For example, Symons's literary agent, Ralph Pinker, reported to the publisher, 'I do not think I have read anything so pitiable as these confessions of Arthur Symons;

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[441] Ibid., p.23.
[442] Karl Beckson, ed. *The Memoir of Arthur Symons: Life and Art in 1890s* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), p.2.

for he wrote them when he thought himself sane, but he was mad'.[443]

It is said that Symons recovered his reason in 1910 and even returned to his writing. However, as Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi observes, 'his later work is almost painful to read, so much is it dependent on his early writing—old sentences and old phrases reappear in contexts to which they are scarcely applicable, and his essays wander constantly from the point'.[444] As Charlesworth Gelpi points out, the description of nightmare in 'A Prelude to Life' reappears in *Confessions* after Symons suffered his breakdown. Symons describes the detail of this nightmare he often saw, an image of obsession Symons suffered since childhood: 'Something had to be done in a second', but 'the second poised over me like a drop of water always about to drip'[445]; the double image of time and water is noteworthy not only as an example of prognostic obsession of Symons, but also as an interesting link between Symons and French philosophers Henri Bergson (1859–1941) and after him, Gaston Bachelard (1884–1963) for they shared the

[443] Ibid., p.2.
[444] Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi, *Dark Passages: The Decadent Consciousness in Victorian Literature* (Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p.98.
[445] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.23.

same consciousness with literary imagination of time and water. For instance, Bergson tries to define the 'moment' in his monumental work *Matière et Mémoire [Matter and Memory]* (1896) and explains the pressing, insecure image of the moment as the present:

> What I call 'my present' has one foot in my past and another in my future. In my past, because the moment in which I am speaking is already far from me; in my future, next, because this moment is impending over the future: it is to the future that I am tending, and could I fix this indivisible present, this infinitesimal element of the curve of time, it is the direction of the future that it would indicate. The psychical state, then, that I call 'my present', must be both a perception of the immediate past and a determination of the immediate future.[446]

Bergson's effort to define 'what the present is' explains to us the nature of the

[446] Henri Bergson, trans. by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer, *Matter and Memory* (New York: Dover, 2004), p.177.

moment one perceives. A moment seems to be a tiny and divided time unit, but it actually belongs to the duration, half to the past and half to the future. In every moment, we perceive the immediate past and determine direction to the future. Bergson's theoretical approach to define 'the moment', which is 'already far from me' and 'is impending over the future', is a much more comfortable explanation to accept than Symons's obsessive image of moment. Bergson's text on the moment is a supportive guide to understand what Symons is sensitively conscious of regarding the perception of the moment, which is always and already passing on in front of him.

Symons, as an impressionistic poet, writes his personal obsession of the moment in the unstoppable time-duration with an image of water. He was also obsessed with a nightmare of 'impending second' since he was a child: 'something had to be done in a second, and all eternity passed, lingering, while the second poised over me like a drop of water always about to drip'.[447] While the conception is similar to that of Bergson, which is explained in a theoretical and objective way, the language of Symons is highly subjective and dramatic, helped

[447] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.23.

by the poetical imagery of water.

Symons's attempt to give the double image of time and water is, with much closer similarity, stated by an author in the next generation. In 1942, a student of Bergson and the author of *L'Intuition de L'Instant* [*The Intuition of Instant*], Gaston Bachelard also tried to visualize the image of time and water in *L'Eau et les Rêves* [*Water and Dreams*]:

> L'être humaine a le destin de l'eau qui coule. L'eau est vraiment l'élément transitoir. [...] L'être voué à l'eau est un être en vertige. Il meurit à chaque minute, sans cesse quelque chose de sa substance s'écoule. [...] La mort quotidienne est la mort de l'eau. L'eau coule toujours, l'eau tombe toujours, elle finit toujours en sa mort horizontale. Dans d'innombrables exemples nous verrons que pour l'imagination matérialisante la mort de l'eau est plus songeuse que la mort de la terre: la peine de l'eau est infinie.
>
> [The human being has the destiny of water, which flows. Water is a truly transient element. The one who is devoted to water is a being in

> dizziness. He dies every minute, and something of his substance is incessantly effused. The quotidian death is the death of water. Water always flows, water always drops, and water always finishes on its horizontal death. In innumerable examples, for materializing imagination, we see that the death of water is more meditative than the death of earth. The pain of water is infinite.] [448]

The text above was published approximately forty years after Symons's *Spiritual Adventures*, but there are many similar conceptions regarding time and water. Bergson, Symons, and Bachelard are all sensitive to the nature of the moment in duration, like a drop in water-flow. The instant a moment is recognized, it is already 'far away'[449] and the next moment at the same time 'poise[s] over'.[450] Thus, every moment 'flows' and 'dies'.[451]

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[448] Bachelard, Gaston, *L'Eau et les Rêves: Essai sur L'imagination de la matière.* (Paris: Libraire José Corti, 1942), p.13. trans. by the Author.
[449] Henri Bergson, trans. by Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer, *Matter and Memory* (New York: Dover, 2004), p.177.
[450] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.23.
[451] Bachelard, Gaston, *L'Eau et les Rêves: Essai sur L'imagination de la matière.* (Paris: Libraire José Corti, 1942), p.13.

Symons's position in the history of literature has gradually changed since the end of the 20th century, from a typical Decadent poet to an important mediator to a Modernist, regarding him as a crucial literary link between the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. It might also be possible to position Symons between Bergson and Bachelard, who share the definition of a moment in time duration with poetic imagination, while only Symons did not intend to theorise his idea, leaving it as subjective text 'confession' while Bergson and Bachelard aim their texts as objective observations.

In *Spiritual Adventures*, we see the very personal dilemma Symons faced in his life. Like Esther Kahn or Christian Trevalga, in order to accomplish his art in a new world, Symons wished to see everything and experience everything, believing 'at every moment, I knew, some spectacle awaited'.[452] It was, in fact, a decision made by Symons. However, at the same time, he was obsessed with the nightmare that 'something had to be done in a second',[453] while the second poised over him like a drop of water. The drop is 'always about to drip', and in his dream,

[452] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.23.
[453] Ibid., p.23.

'it fell, and I was annihilated into depth under depth of blackness'.[454] The image of dripping water as a second by Symons is more desperately abyssal than 'sa mort horizontale' [its horizontal death].[455]

Symons's obsessive consciousness of time and water is quietly led towards the finale of *Spiritual Adventures*. Near the end of the volume, in 'An Autumn City', the image of dripping of water is suggestively used to inform readers of the approaching ending:

> There was a smell of dead leaves everywhere, the moisture of stone, the sodden dampness of earth, water forming into little pools on the ground, creeping out of the earth and into the earth garden. [...] He walked every day through the streets in which the water gathered in puddles between the paving-stones, and ran in little streams down the gutters; he found a kind of autumnal charm in the dripping trees and soaked paths of the Aliscamps; a peaceful, and to him pathetic and

[454] Ibid., p.23.

[455] Bachelard, Gaston, *L'Eau et les Rêves: Essai sur L'imagination de la matière.* (Paris: Libraire José Corti, 1942), p.13.

pleasant odour of decay.[456]

A drop quietly drips and will make a small pool or creep into the earth. Then, all gathered drops will become a little stream, and finally, they are bound together in a main, big stream. The image of water surely leads to the last piece as a grand finale, 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan'.

Water Flows: A Stream of Life

Symons composed *Spiritual Adventures* of stories containing images symbolising various modes of water. Among them, there are the images of water as an origin of life, the image of a drop of water that drips as soon as one perceives it, and the image of a stream as an assembly of every tiny drop. The double image of time and water also reveals Symons's contradictory desire to grasp, bubble-like, every moment, while expecting its pain and frustration at the

[456] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), pp. 124–125.

same time. Through reading the stories of *Spiritual Adventures* one by one, finally, we come to the last piece, 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan', in which Symons surely intends a grand-finale effect. Before this final piece, from 'A Prelude to Life' to 'Seaward Lackland', all the heroes and heroines who started their 'adventures' from their water states have struggled to change their fates, as they have believed they could change the current of their stream in life through their personal efforts. However, in every case, such effort is accompanied by a 'futile energy'.[457] While all of them, in the end, cannot escape from their sense of detachment from others, they sincerely pursue their own beliefs. Esther, Trevalga, and Waydelin pursue their arts; Lackland pursues the supreme devotion for God; and Rosserra exhaustively wanders around seeking a secure, comfortable place for him and his young wife in his belief he can settle her into his place. Among the stories, only a pale, small girl, Lucy, in 'The Childhood of Lucy Newcome', might seem as if she does not attempt to sail out on such adventures voluntarily, but actually she does. Although it is small, she does in fact take her action. Lucy is conscious about her situation, objectively, as if she was secluded in dreaming and

[457] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.23.

living while making up her own stories in her imagination. However, when she tries to tell her story to others, the small attempt is mercilessly shut down by the stream of 'water':

> Sometimes she would talk to Linda instead, sitting on the corner of the kitchen fender; but Linda was not so good a listener, and she had a way of going into the scullery, and turning on a noisy stream of water, just at what ought to have been the most absorbing moment of the narrative.[458]

Symons creates characters who share an origin in water in *Spiritual Adventures* and each equally follows painful routes. In the fluidity of life, all efforts are reduced to the painful scenes in which the characters learn that every small struggle ultimately must surrender to the big stream of life. The finale of *Spiritual Adventures*, 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan', shows this merciless aspect of water, flowing as a symbol of a stream of life. In the city of

[458] Ibid., p.81.

water, Venice, Luxulyan is in a gondola feeling perfectly happy while recalling his past. He is in calm, comfortable water, but an ominous moment approaches him as if an omen of an inevitable future:

> I went out in the gondola yesterday on the lagoon on the other side of the island. [...] I lay and felt perfectly happy, not thinking of anything, hardly conscious of myself. I had closed my eyes, and when I opened them again we were drifting close to a small island on which there was a many-windowed building, most of the windows grated over, and a church with closed doors; the building almost filled the island; it had a walled garden with trees. A kind of moaning sound came from inside the walls, rising and falling, confused and broken. 'It is San Clemente', said the gondolier over my shoulder; 'they keep mad people there, mad women'.[459]

The scene gives readers an impression that Symons already expected his madness

[459] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), pp.200–201.

to come at any time. Symons actually experienced the first symptom of his breakdown while he stayed in Italy with his wife in 1908. Regarding the horrible experience and symptoms he suffered, Symons later writes, 'Was I not really in the situation of my Christian Trevalga?'.[460] In comparing his own situation to that of the hero, Trevalga, Symons produced a piece in *Spiritual Adventures* in which the hero also goes mad at the end of the story. Symons might have unconsciously expected his madness, because he in fact had an uncle who suffered the same symptom:

> To trace, to retrace, to attempt to define or to divine the way in which one's madness begins, the exact fashion in which it seizes on one, is as impossible as to divine why one is sane. That I inherited madness from certain ancestors of mine—one never knows how many generations back —is unquestionable. That I ever imagined it in myself is perhaps just as unquestionable.[461]

[460] Symons, *Confessions: A Study in Pathology* (New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, 1930), p.1.
[461] Ibid., p.2.

Therefore, should we conclude that Symons only feared that his madness was an unavoidable, detestable symptom? When Symons was at his peak in his literary career, it seems he understood insanity as a sort of privileged condition of the few, chosen artistic talents. Symons presumably believed it could generate poetic reverie that was impossible for ordinary, 'sane' people. Symons's essay on French poet Gérard de Nerval is an interesting example of such a view. In the first edition of *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (1899), Symons writes about Nerval's problem of madness, pointing out that he 'lost the whole world and gained his own soul'.[462] The description reappears in Symons's *Confessions*, as if Symons tried to confirm the problem of Nerval as that of Symons's own:

> The problem of Gérard de Nerval is that of one who has lost the whole world and gained his own soul. *Le Rêve et la Vie* is the most intensely personal thing he ever wrote—a burning and a thrilling human document in all conscience—because it is a narrative of

[462] Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958), p.6.

> madness, unique as madness itself; he was only wise, passionate, collected, really master of himself, when he was insane.[463]

Symons might have feared his madness quietly approaching due to heredity. However, at the same time, he might have hoped to attain the special state in which he could gain his soul within a new poetic reverie. As Beckson analyses that 'Symons has a strikingly pre-Freudian awareness of those unconscious forces—perverse and self-destructive —that shape both the artist's personality and his work',[464] Symons might have had mixed feelings regarding the condition of madness. Madness may bring new vision to the poet's eyes, but he may be totally isolated from everything.

Considering Symons's contradictory feelings, the scene of Luxulyan in Venice seems more suggestive, as if Symons already understood his coming madness as unavoidable, as he was powerless against the big stream of water, the stream of life. Luxulyan, who has a 'nervous restlessness' like Symons, gradually

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[463] Symons, *Confessions: A Study in Pathology* (New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, 1930), p.2.
[464] Karl Beckson, ed. *The Memoir of Arthur Symons: Life and Art in 1890s* (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1977), pp.1–2.

becomes unstable in his mind: 'Does the too exciting exquisiteness of Venice drive people mad? Two madhouses in the water! It is like a menace'.[465] 'I know not what I am dreading, not the mere fear of water, though I have always had that, but some terrible expectancy, which keeps me now from getting any rest by day or by night'.[466] As the water's surface changes, Luxulyan's mental condition is becoming neurotically nervous and unstable in the city of water. Lying in a gondola, Luxulyan is quietly thinking about his past, while hearing a kind of moaning sound from the wall of a madhouse, San Clemente:

> The world, ideas, sensations, all are fluid, and I flow through them, like a gondola carried along by the current; no, like a weed adrift on it. The journal ends there, and the writing of the last page is faint and unsteady.[467]

The adventures that begin in 'A Prelude to Life' thus finish in the city of

[465] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.200.
[466] Ibid., p.203.
[467] Ibid., p.205.

water, Venice. When readers arrive in the scene, all the previous adventures are gathered together and reduced into the image of water flow in Venice, as if they were all in the same current, like a weed adrift on it. Each character, each struggle, every image ultimately returns to Symons himself:

> In a sense, the contents of this volume are not stories at all but 'imaginary portraits', as Symons himself called them. They are psychological enquiries into the "souls" of certain persons of sensitivity and refinement, all of whom are, in one form or another, extensions of Symons' own personality.[468]

As Munro points out, they are all, in one form or another, extensions of Symons's own personality. They are figures generated from Symons. Thus, they share the same sense of detachment to the outer world and rootless origins; however, each sails out to different adventures.

This is Symons's personal attempt to live others' lives within a stage of

[468] John M. Munro, *Arthur Symons* (New York: Twayne, 1969), p.105.

literary fiction, as he was a boy who escaped into the literary world: '"Don Quixote" first opened my eyes to an imaginative world outside of myself'.[469] As Yeats describes, Symons 'could slip as it were into the mind of another'.[470] Symons exerted such ability in search of his place—a secure, solid place to root himself—by living another life and holding his own temperament, calling such attempts 'spiritual adventures' in his book. Such an attempt, in Charlesworth's words, could be rephrased an attempt to find a 'mask':

> His writings show also that he lost his reason because he could not find a 'mask' which would adequately define his intense self-consciousness. [...] He knew that the mask is not separate from personality but a partial reflection of it.[471]

What Symons tried in *Spiritual Adventures* may be his personal search for an

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[469] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.17.
[470] W. B. Yeats, *Autobiographies: The Collected Works of W.B. Yeats,* ed. by William H. O'Donnell and Douglas N. Archbald (New York: Scribner, 1999), p.246.
[471] Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi, *Dark Passages: The Decadent Consciousness in Victorian Literature* (Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), pp.98–99.

'adequate mask' in the hopes that different situations or circumstances might bring a secure, new, comfortable place for him. Most of us probably have imagined living the life of another, thinking 'something in my life might be changed'. But Symons repeatedly exhibits his belief that one's inborn temperament is unchangeable in the stories of *Spiritual Adventures*. Due to Symons's 'intense self-consciousness',[472] he strongly recognises his detached feeling to any solid place in the world, while he shows his stubbornness to protect his eyes freed from any prejudice from the outside world. This is the dilemma of Symons, as he surely suffered from his insecure identity of belonging to nothing and his hope to protect his transparent sensitivity. In exchange for the eyes freed from prejudice, Symons had to accept the detachment as inescapable. The result of such contradictory feelings must be painful, as Symons expected and could not avoid 'the prison of the self':

> The prison of the self ... became a terrifying reality in the mind of Symons. He tried to escape it in every way which was open to

[472] Ibid., p.98.

him—religious belief, the love of woman, the artistic and ordering imagination—but each of these passages, for him, at least, led only the more directly down into the prison at the very center of his mind.[473]

As a wanderer, Symons's life may be described as a history of escape. He professed his adoration of the wandering life of gypsies as an ideal, praising their freedom. In a talk show on the B.B.C. on December 26, 1954, Beerbohm recalled Symons saying 'the nomadic life was the best of all lives for an artist'.[474] While supporting 'nomadic life' as ideal for an artist, Symons might have been 'the impressionist in painful isolation' at the same time,[475] just as all the characters in *Spiritual Adventures* are.

With his impressionistic eyes, Symons chose Venice, the favourite city of water for him, as the setting for the finale of *Spiritual Adventures*. The water city would reflect every personal spiritual adventure in the colour of water, helped by the visual images of the gondola and water flow as a representation of

[473] Ibid., p.119.
[474] Max Beerbohm, 'Max Beerbohm', *From the Third Programme*, ed. John Morris (London: Nonesuch Press, 1956), p.158.
[475] Derek Stanford, *Critics of the Nineties* (New York: Roy Publishers, 1970), p.114.

unchangeable force of life. Every tiny drop assembles to create a stream, and it finally gathers to create a greater stream; thus, if one is swept up in the current, he can only be carried by it, and it is impossible to change or resist it. Symons exhibits this mercilessness of the stream of life, not directly, but with his original, impressionistic effect upon readers' eyes. The very personal adventures started in 'A Prelude to Life' with a scene of a dog 'snapping at the bubbles that ran continually past him on the water'[476] finally arrive at no solid place and only flow through the water 'like a gondola carried along by the current; no, like a weed adrift on it'.[477] As water circulates, every scene lived by each character in the volume incessantly goes back to the beginning as a reflection of the author, Symons.

Someone Like Me, Somewhere All Over the World

[476] Symons, *The Collected Works of Arthur Symons Volume 5: Spiritual Adventures* (London: Martin Secker, 1924), p.23.
[477] Ibid., p.205.

We have seen the various images of water Symons employed as literary effects in his *Spiritual Adventures*. As an author of *The Symbolist Movement of Literature*, Symons is always conscious of the role of symbolism in literary works. Through reading the stories, our eyes will perceive the prevalence of pale colours, just like those in Whistler's paintings, as there is no description of bright sunshine or vivid colours in the text—just several visual images of various modes of water, such as rain, river, and seaside. Each story proceeds with background images of the colour of water, while the heroes and heroines also share the origin of water. It seems an emblem of their innate rootlessness, as if they all belong to water, not to a solid land, just as Edward Said describes his own identity as a set of 'currents, flowing currents, rather than a fixed place or a stable set of objects'.[478]

When we notice that the characters equally suffer from a sense of detachment from others, like Symons, we cannot stop regarding each character as a reflection of the author; thus, even heroines such as Esther and Lucy resemble Symons. Since the reflective figures are generated from Symons himself, they begin their adventures to find a new state, believing they can change the current of

[478] Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said, *Parallels and Paradoxes: Explorations in Music and Society*, ed. by Ara Guzelimian (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), p.5.

life with personal efforts—some pursue further accomplishment of their arts, and some pursue supreme religious devotion—but every adventure is always accompanied by the same, futile energy. It seems as if Symons cannot invent an easy, convenient solution for them, as an author of fiction, because the difficulties they suffer are equally serious for Symons. Above all, he is a man with transparent susceptibility and thus could slip into another's mind easily, as Yeats stated; and, since Symons produced each character as his reflection, it is—needless to say—difficult to invent an easy solution. From the viewpoint that each character is in some way reflecting Symons himself, we notice further, shared aspects that are also related to water—the obsessive image of time and water. Symons's desire to grasp every moment, every sight in front of him, in London is actually reflected in figures such as Esther or Trevalga, as if 'to see' is a synonym of 'to experience'. However, such an attempt can easily be converted to an image of a nightmare when it is developed to an extreme. In 'A Prelude to Life', Symons reveals his obsession that he has to do something in a second while the next second is imposing upon him like a dripping drop of water. Such a dual image of time and water explain Symons's literary awareness with analogies to

that of Bergson or Bachelard, while Symons's is the most painful and filled with personal fear.

As 'Paterian' Symons starts the volume with a 'Prelude' with an intention to compose the book with a symphony-like effect, he must finish with a long, grand 'Finale'; thus, he surely intends the final, longest piece, 'Extracts from the Journal of Henry Luxulyan', which serves as a conclusion for all other pieces in the volume, just as 'A Prelude to Life' plays an introductory role for them, to emphasise the image of water as an origin. In the final piece, Symons pushes the image of water flow to the foreground, as if he tried to persuade himself to stop every struggle to change the current. Before reading the story of Luxulyan, we have seen stories of adventures with painful efforts and struggles that never result in perfectly happy endings; thus, the impression given here is very conclusive and intense. The scene in which Luxulyan is hearing the voices of madwomen in a gondola in Venice is as if Symons expected his madness approaching in the near future, as he in fact suffered the first symptom in Italy within three years after *Spiritual Adventures'* publication.

As Charlesworth Gelpi notes, one cause of Symons's madness was that he

could not find 'a mask' for himself.[479] Symons sought another life, another identity, to escape; thus, he tried to live the lives of others within the stage of fictions under the title of *Spiritual Adventures*. In Fletcher's view, 'Symons is a poet who failed in the search for a single identity' might be true,[480] but at the same time, it seems Symons chose such a state of his own will, for he was an advocate of 'nomadic life' as the best of all lives for an artist, therefore he was eager to protect his eyes freed from any prejudices and admitted that his inborn rootlessness contributed for them. Just as Edward Said describes his own identity as a set of 'currents, flowing currents, rather than a fixed place or a stable set of objects',[481] Symons and Said are self-identified, cosmopolitan wanderers who consider rootless background as privilege; Said says 'wandering around is really what I like to do most',[482] and another cosmopolitan wanderer, Daniel Barenboim, states that 'my feeling of being at home somewhere is really a feeling of transition, as everything is in life. […] I am happiest when I can be at peace with the idea of

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[479] Barbara Charlesworth Gelpi, *Dark Passages: The Decadent Consciousness in Victorian Literature* (Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), p.98.
[480] Ian Fletcher, 'Exploration and Recoveries – II: Symons, Yeats and the Demonic Dance', *The London Magazine,* Vol.7 No.6 (June 1960), p.48.
[481] Daniel Barenboim and Edward Said, *Parallels and Paradoxes: Explorations in Music and Society*, ed. by Ara Guzelimian (London: Bloomsbury, 2003), p.5.
[482] Ibid., p.4.

fluidity'.[483] The embracive image of water within *Spiritual Adventures* is discussed in a way that reflects both Symons's personal dilemma and his wish to aestheticize his own background. The elemental image of water in *Spiritual Adventures* surely proves that Symons is not a writer of scrappy impressions; he in fact succeeded in organising each story by systematically employing the symbolism of water, thus evoking the fluidity of life we equally belong to.

While choosing the transparent, water-like state as freedom, those with such a temperament inevitably have to struggle with their isolation or detachment from others. Symons made the characters in *Spiritual Adventures* equally share his own temperament but distributed them in different situations as if he believed some outer factors might positively change the larger current of one's life. Such an attempt could be concluded as the representation of Symons's escapism. Nanjyo observes that 'escape' is one of the most important keywords in Symons's literature but that escapism must be an unfavourable concept, especially for the Anglo-Saxon world, since it evokes an image of cowardice.[484] However, in

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[483] Ibid., p.4.

[484] Takenori Nanjyo, '"escape" no hyocho: Arthur Symons to hourou no ukara' [Representation of 'escape' : Arthur Symons and wanderers], *Itsudatsu no Keifu* [The Genealogy of Deviation], ed. by Yasunori Takahashi (Tokyo: Kenkyu-sha,

Spiritual Adventures, it is possible to see Symons's positive attitude regarding escapism as a promoter of 'nomadic life'. Once one faces a difficulty in some place, he does not have to stick to it; he is always able to start another life in a different place, again and again, just like adventures—even if he faced the same difficulties, he could make another start. Just as a big flow of water circulates, everyone is in the current of life and, therefore, can 'escape from the restricted community' and 'go for a new place', as Symons announces. Since Symons is not an unrealistic optimist, he never invented an easy, convenient ending for each piece in *Spiritual Adventures*, but Symons in fact invented the title 'adventures' as if he encourages people who assume the situation they face is inescapable to think again. The struggle might be inevitably painful, but still, it deserves to be called an 'adventure'. This pessimistic but strong will to live a given life (even if it is miserable) reflects the aspect of Symons as a passionate reader of Nietzsche. As Katagami observes, Symons is an escapist, but at the same time, he must be an advocate of the fluidity of life.[485]

1999), pp.443–444.

[485] Katagami, Noboru, 'Arthur Symons Ron' [A Study on Arthur Symons], *Gendai Nihon Bungaku Zenshu* 59 [The Anthology of Contemporary Japanese Literature 59] (Tokyo: Chikuma-shobo, 1958), p.206.

Conclusion

In four chapters in total, I have tried to grasp Symons's cosmopolitanism. In chapter 1, after reviewing examples of Symons's awareness of the fictive nature of western orientalism, I reviewed Symons's cosmopolitan view, as admitted in his travel essay, 'Venice', which is still applicable to the discussion of twenty-first-century cosmopolitanism and suggests possibilities for aesthetic cosmopolitanism. In chapter 2, the theme of 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' is further discussed, focusing on Symons's role as a flâneur poet in London who devoted his pen to sketching the mobility of the modern city wherein the hybrid beauty of the anonymous crowd exists. Without claiming the term 'cosmopolitan', Symons expected to expand the circle of readers who gaze favourably upon the hybrid cityscape filled with the diversity of human lives, as Symons did. Such a humble, aesthetic cosmopolitanism cannot dramatically bring rapid change to world views, but over a longer span, it will not be powerless. Symons must have recognised the

possibility that slower change could be brought about by his aesthetic writings. The possibility of transforming the world view is surely found in Symons's writings about London, for he is a flâneur poet who could prioritise his own subjectivity as well as others', praising the diversity of human lives as a force that enlivens a place.

In chapter 3, I discussed Symons's periodical ventures as examples of how he put his cosmopolitanism into practice as a presenter of both international and domestic literature. Because the editorial policy allowed him to create an international literary exchange in its pages, the 'cosmopolitan right to visit' is realised there, freed from any restrictions of schools, name values, or nationalities. *The Savoy* suggests the possibility of a cosmopolitan magazine that welcomes the interchange of international talents, accelerating global shifts towards then-new literature, *Symbolism*. In chapter 4, finally, I focused on the ambivalence of cosmopolitanism Symons noticed and expressed in his ominously beautiful impressionistic writings in *Spiritual Adventures*. While he was proud of his rootless background, Symons sought another life, an identity that would allow him to escape through literature. Symons is an advocate of the 'nomadic life' as

the best of all lives for an artist. Edward Said describes his own identity is a set of currents, flowing currents, rather than a fixed place or a stable set of objects. Symons and Said are self-identified, cosmopolitan wanderers who consider their rootless backgrounds to be a privilege. The elemental image of water in *Spiritual Adventures* surely proves that Symons is not a writer of scrappy impressions, for he succeeded in organising each story by systematically employing the symbolism of water, evoking the fluidity of the life we all equally belong to. The flow of water circulates, and everyone is in the current of life.

In Symons, we have surely found an example of a Victorian writer who gazed at the world in front of him with a keen, cosmopolitan eye, always welcoming the multicultural space filled with human diversity. When we sympathize with the perspective given by Symons, we are sharing the cosmopolitan gaze with him, a gaze that would allow us see the world in front of us differently. Symons's literature shows the universal truth that a viewpoint from the past is not detached from the present, as Symons's cosmopolitanism reveals many commonalities with and findings that are relevant to the many 21st-century discussions of cosmopolitanism. Through reading literary works written in the

past, we are able to see the present from a new perspective, and are even able to find new values and possibilities in the future.

This thesis begins with the travel essay 'Venice', which is filled with the fresh excitements of the travelling Symons who then willingly enjoys the concept of the 'cosmopolitan right to visit' and ends with a story of a man who quietly anticipates his inescapable breakdown in Venice. Symons names Venice as his favourite destination, and it symbolically embodies contrastive duality. Symons already realized at this point the impossibility or hardship of the realization of his ideal cosmopolitanism as multiculturalism; however, he still sincerely wished such a world would come to be.

In Symons's work, we see the affluence of this Victorian writer's cosmopolitan perspectives. This automatically promises the fruitful possibilities of rereading past written works, which surely allow us to see the future differently.

Appendix I

List of the Literary Contents of *The Savoy*

Number One (January 1896)

Editorial Note

1. *On Going to Church*. An Article by George Bernard Shaw

2. *To Nancy*. A Story by Frederick Wedmore

3. *Mandoline*. A Poem, translated by Arthur Symons from the *Fête Galantes* of Paul Verlaine

4. *A Good Prince*. An Article by Max Beerbohm

5. *The Eyes of Pride*. A Story by Ernest Dowson

6. *The Three Musicians*. A Poem by Aubrey Beardsley

7. *Zola: The Man and His Work*. An Article by Havelock Ellis

8. *Two Love Poems – The Shadowy Horses: The Travail and Passion*. by W.B. Yeats

9. *Dieppe: 1895*. An Article by Arthur Symons

10. *Ellen*. A Story by Rudolf Dircks

11. *Sea-Music*. A Poem by Mathilde Blind

12. *A Golden Decade in English Art*. An Article by Joseph Pennell

13. *A Glass of Whiskey*. A Story by Humphrey James

14. *Impenitentia Ultima*. A Poem by Ernest Dowson

15. *The Binding of the Hair*. A Story by W. B. Yeats

16. *On Criticism and the Critic*. An Essay by Selwyn Image

17. *The Wanderers*. A Poem by Arthur Symons

18. *Under the Hill*. A Romantic Story by Aubrey Beardsley

Number Two (April 1896)

1. *A Mad Saint*. An Article by Cesare Lombroso, translated by Havelock Ellis

2. *New Year's Eve*. A Poem by Arthur Symons

3. *A Mere Man*. by A New Writer

4. *Saint-Germain-En-Laye*. A Poem by Ernest Dowson

5. *Rosa Alchemica*. A Story by W.B. Yeats

6. *Freidrich Nietzsche – I*. An Article by Havelock Ellis

Number Three (July 1896) – Literary Contents

1. *Editorial Note*

2. *Anthony Garstin's Courtship*. A Story by Hubert Crackanthorpe

3. *Breton Afternoon*. A Poem by Ernest Dowson

4. *William Blake and His Illustrations to the Divine Comedy*.

    I. *His Opinions upon Art*. The First of Three Articles by W.B. Yeats

5. *In Carnival.* A Poem by Arthur Symons

6. *The Clown.* A Story by Roman Mathieu-Wierzbinski

7. *O'Sullivan Rua To Mary Lavell.* A Poem by W.B. Yeats

8. *Friedrich Nietzsche – II*. The Second of Three Articles by Havelock Ellis

9. *From The 'Ignez De Castro' of Antonio Ferreira. Translated into English Verse by Edgar Prestage*

10. *Bertha At The Fair*. A Sketch

11. *The Ballad of A Barber*. A Poem by Aubrey Beardsley

12. *The Simplification of Life*. An Essay by Edward Carpenter

13. *The Future Phenomenon*. A Prose Poem translated from the French of Stéphane Mallarmé by George Moore

14. *A Literary Causerie: - On Some Novels, chiefly French. By Arthur Symons*

15. *Note*

Number Four (August 1896) – Literary Contents

1. *Beauty's Hour*. A Phantasy by O. Shakespear

2. *William Blake And His Illustrations To The Divine Comedy*.

II. *His Opinions on Dante*. The Second of Three Articles by W.B. Yeats

3. *Venite, Descendamus*. A Poem by Ernest Dowson

4. *Two Foolish Hearts*. A Scene of Rustic Life. By George Morley

5. *In Pious Mood*. A Translation by Osman Edwards into English Verse of Emile Verhaeren's Poem 'Pieusement'

6. *Friedrich Nietzsche – III*. The Third of Three Articles by Havelock Ellis

7. *Stella Maligna,* A Poem by Arthur Symons

8. *The Dying of Francis Donne.* A Study. By Ernest Dowson

9. *Three Sonnets. (Hawker of Morwenstow. – Mother Ann: Foundress of the Shakers. – Münster*: A.D. 1534.) By Lionel Johnson

10. *The Ginger Bread Fair At Vincennes*. A Colour Study. By Arthur Symons

11. *The Song Of The Women*. A Wealden Trio. By Ford Madox Hueffer

12. *Doctor And Patient*. A Story by Rudolf Dircks

13. *A Literary Causerie*: On a Book of Verses. By Arthur Symons

14. *Note*

Number Five (September 1896) – Literary Contents

1. *Beauty's Hour*. A Phantasy. By O. Shakespear

2. '*Oh Petites Fées…'* A Translation by Gabriel Gilbert into English Verse from the French of Jean Moréas

3. *William Blake And His Illustrations To The Divine Comedy*.

III. *The Illustrations of Dante*. The Third of Three Articles by W.B. Yeats

4. *A Song*. By Ernest Dowson

5. *Mutability*. A Story by Theodore Wratislaw

6. *O'Sullivan Rua To The Secret Rose.* A Poem by W.B.Yeats

7. *The Old Women.* A Poem by Arthur Symons

8. *A Romance of Three Fools.* A Story by Ernest Rhys

9. *In Scituate.* A Poem by Bliss Carman

10. *At The Alhambra:* Impression And Sensations. By Arthur Symons

11. *Eastern Dancers.* A Poem by Sarojini Chattopadhyay

12. *A Literary Causerie: On Edmond de Goncourt*. By Arthur Symons

Number Six (October 1896) – Literary Contents

1. *The Idiots*. A Story by Joseph Conrad

2. *In Saint Jacques.* A Poem by Arthur Symons

3. Concerning Jude The Obscure. An Essay by Havelock Ellis

4. *A Soul At Lethe's Brink.* A Poem by Edith M. Thomas

5. *The Lesson of Millais.* An Article by Arthur Symons

6. *The Epitaphe In Form Of A Ballade.* A Translation by Theodore Wratislaw into English from the French of François Villon

7. *Elsa.* A Story by the Author of 'A Mere Man'

8. *The Three Witches.* A Poem by Ernest Dowson

9. *Some Notes On The Stained Glass Windows And Decorative Paintings Of The Church Of St. Martin' –On–The Hill, Scarborough*. An Article by Oliver George Destrée.

10. *A Causerie*: *From a Castle in Ireland*. By Arthur Symons

Number Seven (November 1896) – Literary Contents

1. Editorial Note

2. *Morag of the Glen*, a story by Fiona Macleod

3. *The Unloved*, a poem by Arthur Symons

4. *Casanova*, an essay by Havelock Ellis

5. *Catullus*: *Carmen CI,* a verse translation from the Latin by Aubrey

Beardsley

6. *In Sligo* : *Rosses Point and Glencar*, an essay by Arthur Symons

7. *Windle - Straws. 1. O'Sullivan Rua to the Curlew.* 2. *Out of the Old Days,* poems by W. B. Yeats

8. *Emile Verhaeren*, an essay by Osman Edwards

9. *The Tables of the Law*, a story by W. B. Yeats

10. *Epilogue*, a poem by Ernest Dowson

11. *A Literary Causerie*: On the 'Invectives' of Verlaine, by Arthur Symons

Number Eight (December 1896) – Literary Contents by Arthur Symons

1. *Mundi Victima*, a poem

2. *Walter Pater: Some Characteristics*, an essay

3. *The Childhood of Lucy Newcome,* a story

4. *Hérodiade,* a translation into English verse from Stéphane Mallarmé's Poem

5. *The Isles Of Aran,* an essay

6. *A Literary Causerie: By Way of Epilogue*

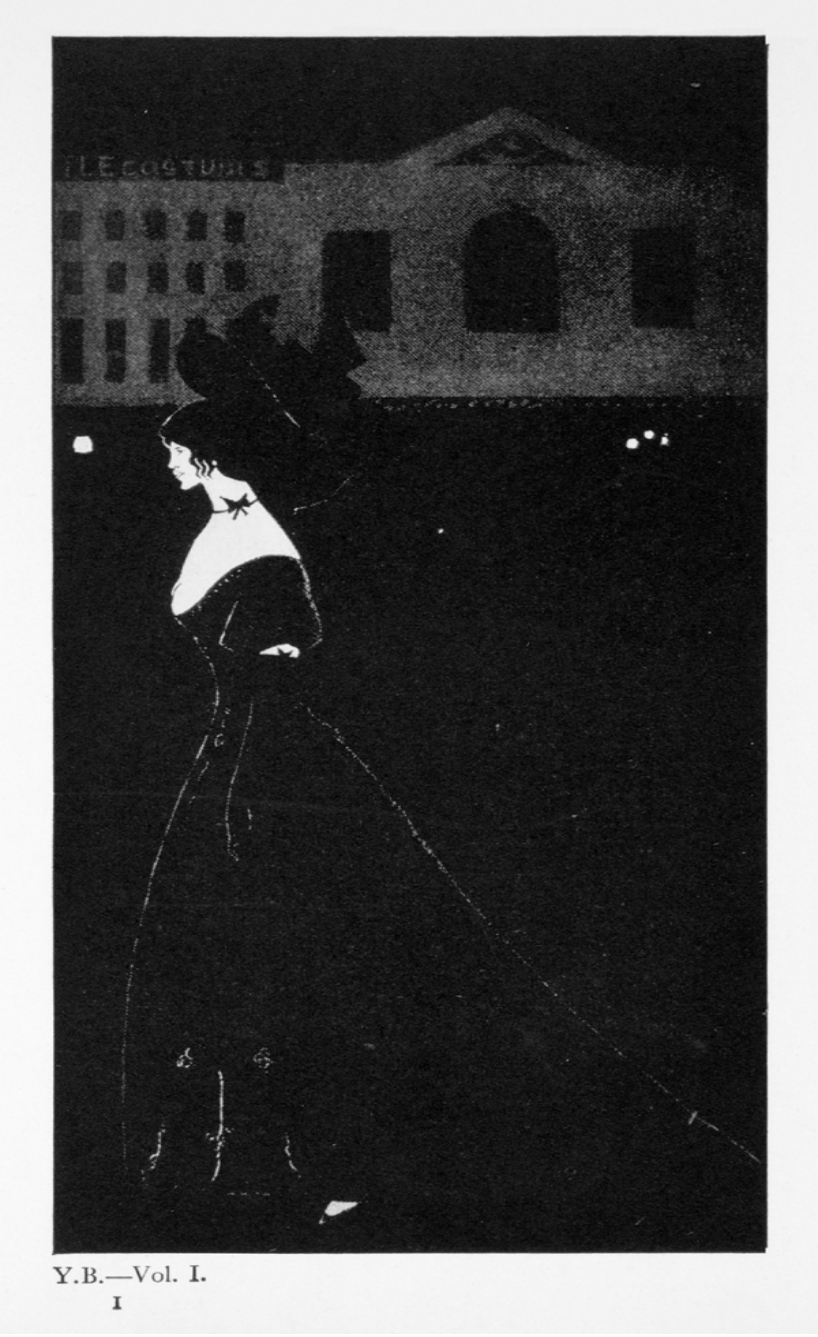

Figure 1.

Aubrey Beardsley, 'Night Piece'

The Yellow Book: An Illustrated Quarterly Volume One (April 1894)

Figure i.

Aubrey Beardsley, Design for the Prospectus of *The Savoy* No.1

（January 1896）

Figure ii.

Aubrey Beardsley, Design for the Prospectus of *The Savoy* No.1 (January 1896)

Figure iii.

Aubrey Beardsley, Drawing for the Christmas Card for

The Savoy, No.1 (January 1896)

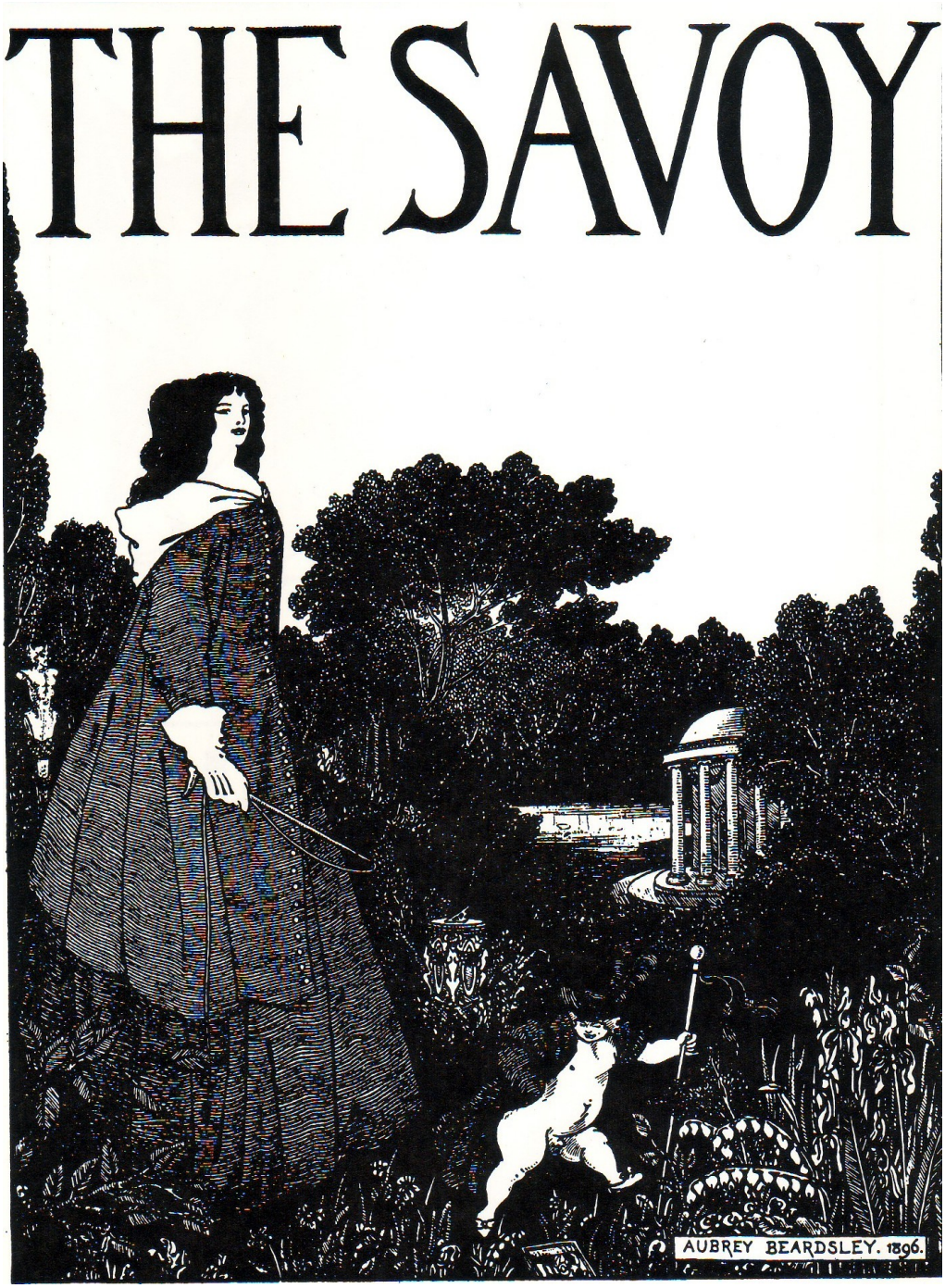

Figure iv.

Aubrey Beardsley, Cover Design for *The Savoy*, No.1

(January 1896)

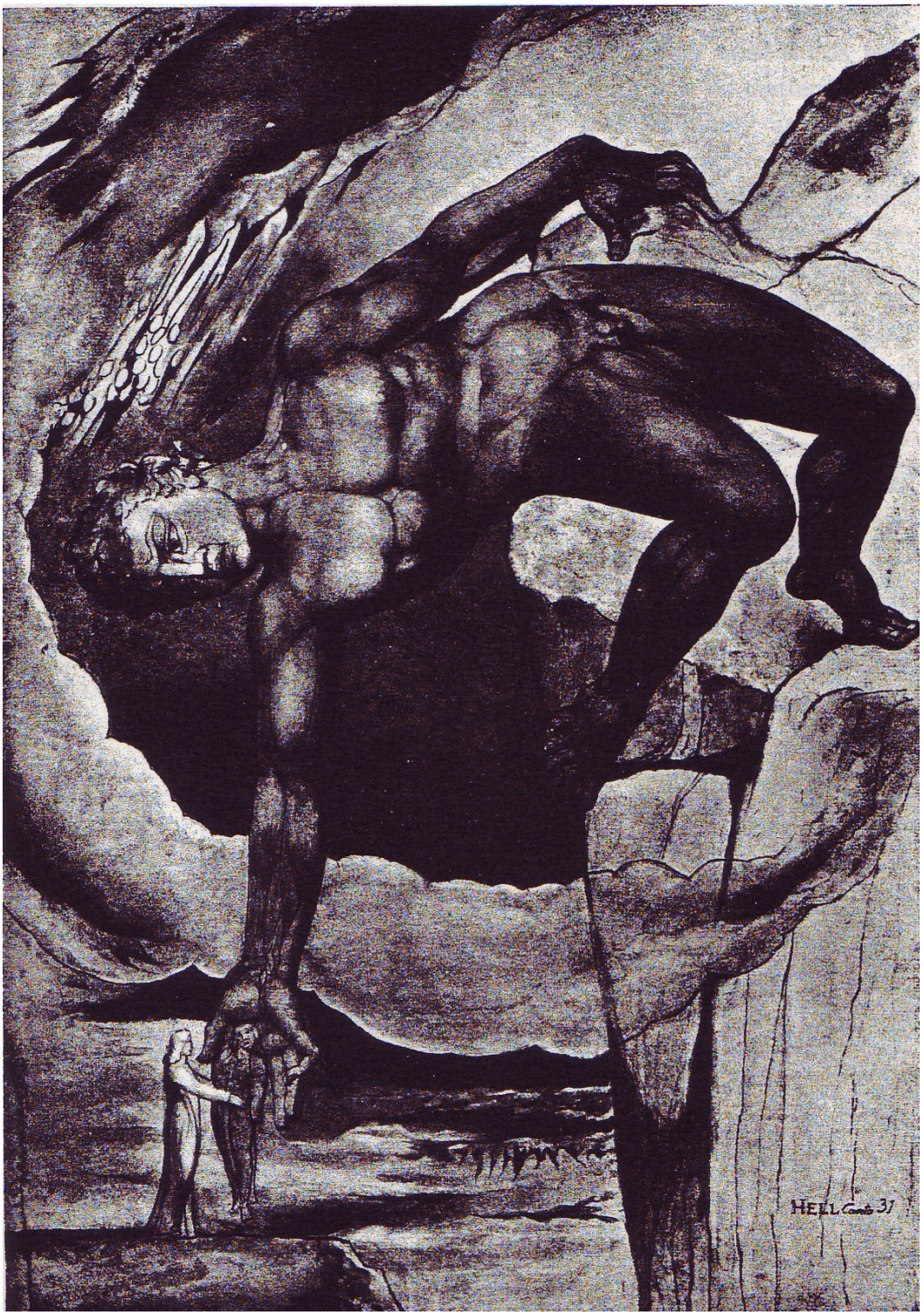

Figure v.

William Blake, *Antaeus setting Virgil and Dante upon the verge of Cocytus*

Appendix II

The List of Japanese Translations of Symons's Works

'Aubrey Beardsley' (1898)

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[池田正　『アーサー・シモンズ短編集』安達書店 1963 興論社 1966]

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[工藤好美　『エスター・カーン』平凡社ライブラリー　２００１]

'Venice', *Cities* (1903)

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[平田禿木「水の都」『平田禿木選集　第四巻　英文学エッセイ II』南雲堂 1986 年　136 頁-155 頁]

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